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ISLAM AND ORIENTALISM

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BY
MARYAM JAMEELAH

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This book is dedicated to all Muslim college and university students in Pakistan and abroad so that they may gain a full appreciation of the conspiracy working for their ruin and what can be done to frustrate its malicious activities before it is too late.

Ahwas bin Hakim reported from his father that a man asked the Messenger of Allah about evils. He replied: Don't ask me regarding evils but ask me regarding good, (saying it thrice). Then he said ; Beware ! Surely the worst of evils is the evil of the learned and surely the best of good is the good of the learned.

Ziyad bin Huzair reported : Umar asked me : Do you know what will destroy Islam ? 'No,' replied I. He said ; The error of a learned man and the dispute of a hypocrite about the Book* and the orders of misguided leaders.

(*Mishkat ul-Masabih*)

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* The Holy Quran.

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

PREFACE

I was born forty six years ago into a pleasant and prosperous suburb near New York City. My ancestry was German and my family through living there four generations had become entirely assimilated to American life. My great-grand parents had migrated from Germany between 1848-1861 seeking brighter economic opportunities. Although of Jewish origin, neither my mother nor my father were observant, their Jewishness being purely nominal. Thus I was raised like my elder sister in a typical American environment and received an ordinary secular education at the local public schools.

My curiousity, interest and later my obsession with Islam can be traced back as far as when I was a child of ten who was fascinated with the historical relationship between the Jews and the Arabs. At first I was interested in the Arabs only so far as they had any impact upon the Jews and Judaism but it was not long before I discovered that the original Semitic heritage of the Jews since the days of ancient Greece had been much diluted and adulterated with

the civilization of Europe while until the rise of European imperialism in the 18th-19th centuries, the Arabs had preserved their Semitic heritage intact. I then reached the conclusion that the Arabs must be the only real Semites while the Jews were Semites in little more than name. After World War II when almost all of Christendom renounced its two millenia of anti-Semitism and rallied most enthusiastically behind the cause of Zionism, I could no longer identify myself emotionally with the Jews and began to think of myself as if I were an Arab ! I then began a ten-year course of self-study of whatever books I could find on the subject to prove that the anti-Arab propaganda was not justified. In the public libraries of the schools I attended, there was no lack of material and throughout my adolescence in New York, I gleaned whatever books I could find on the Arabs and Islam from the numerous works all written from the view-point of the Christian missionary, orientalism or Zionism. Paradoxically, the more anti-Islamic propaganda I read, the more fervently I felt compelled to prove both to myself and to others that it was malicious and distorted. As I neared adulthood, I became convinced that it was not the Arabs that had made Islam great but the reverse. Had the Arabs not embraced Islam, they would today be as insignificant as the Zulu tribes in South Africa ; Arabic would be only another obscure primitive dialect, probably by now, long extinct. I was finally attracted to Islam because it alone among all the

religions of the world, offers the most satisfying and convincing answers to all the great questions of life while the exant teachings of other faiths are restricted and fragmentary. Islam alone is all-embracing, giving total and comprehensive guidance on all vital aspects of individual and collective existence which being divinely revealed and self-sufficient, insists upon absolute moral values and most vehemently rejects the eclecticism, innovations and moral relativity I so much abhorred as responsible for the evil I saw all around me.

The more I studied Islam, the more I grew convinced that the implicit acceptance of this faith was the only road not only to righteousness and spiritual perfection but also the most potent medicine for mental health. Its demand that everything must be judged according to a single standard of absolute values, transcending the limitations of time or place, makes the individual an integrated personality. Islam demands that the individual devote his concentrated attention towards fulfilling his duties of worshipping Allah and his serving his fellow beings and abandon as useless all vain pursuits which distract him from that end. The purpose of life is please to Allah through implicit obedience to His Divine law in the Holy Quran and the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet and attain eternal salvation in the Hereafter. According to Islamic teachings, life is not a pleasure-trip but an examination. Every minute of our lives we are being tested by God for our faith or lack of faith and the suffering and

misfortune we endure on this earth is not the decisive calamity but only part of the testing. Allah did not put us here to be happy and enjoy ourselves but that we may succeed or fail in His examination, the final results of which will not be known until the Hereafter.

Islam encourages self-protection. Because the individual Muslim personifies Islam itself, Islam could not exist on earth without him. That is why the Muslim is forbidden to wilfully injure himself or commit any self-destructive act. He is not allowed to eat dirty foods like swine-flesh as these will impair his physical, mental and moral health. He is forbidden to drink poisonous beverages or consume intoxicants such as narcotics or alcohol which destroy the body and mind. He is not allowed to indulge in excess of any kind because these all result in self-destruction. Above all, he is forbidden to commit suicide under any circumstances. As life and death can occur only by Divine decree, Islam regards suicide as one of the most unpardonable sins because the taking of one's life demonstrates a complete absence of faith in Allah and the Hereafter. Hence suicide among genuine believers is virtually unknown. The true believer places his total reliance upon Allah and performs his duties to obey the Holy Quran and the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet. He never suffers any sense of failure even if his efforts do not appear to bear fruit during his lifetime. The genuine believer in Islam is not jealous of other men because of their happiness, health or

worldly success because he cannot know what will be their fate after death. The true Muslim is the most courageous of all men because he fears only Allah and is certain that Allah is always near to protect him and since he knows that his fate has already been predetermined, nobody can cause his injury or death before its allotted time. Belief in this doctrine of predestination gives the faithful courage and strength of mind. Whatever happens, the genuine Muslim takes positive and constructive action. If it is a good thing, he will exploit its advantages. It is a calamity, he should think only of its positivo side because there is a lesson in every experience. When a Muslim is afflicted with some inevitable tragedy, he accepts it with serene resignation. Unbelievers deceive themselves by attempting to flee from the inevitable. When they find themselves overwhelmed by adversity, they drown themselves in alcohol, narcotics or commit suicide. By attempting to flee from the inevitable, one only destroys his own mind and soul. Pessimism is forbidden in Islam because it kills hope and striving. To hope for death to finish earthly suffering is unlawful because by living longer, the Muslim may yet win salvation through an increase in his good works and thus expiate his sins while death ends these opportunities forever. Thus the Muslim possesses everything he needs to make him happy. "Islam" literally means "peace"—peace with Allah, peace with one's self, peace with one's fellow beings and eternal peace in the Life Hereafter.

Islam does not only result in the harmonious integration of the individual personality but the integration of his society as well. A specific environment with its own values in indispensable. As a realistic practical way of life, Islam assumes that the people who live according to its path will be living in an Islamically-governed society. Without an Islamic environment, the life of the individual becomes impossible or at least, extremely difficult. Therefore whoever wishes to be Muslim must understand that he cannot devote himself to the practice of Islam except in a Muslim environment. The Muslim knows that his faith cannot hope to thrive under the domination of an alien, conflicting culture. This is why an Islamic government and an Islamic state are essential if Islamic injunctions are to be properly and fully enforced. The Muslim cannot possibly accept the Christian dictim ; "Give unto Ceasar the things which are Ceasars's and unto God the things which are God's." Islam does not tolerate secularism. Everything belongs to Almighty Allah. Politics must be subordinated to moral ends rather than dictated by mere expediency. Islam believes above all in the rule of law under which ruler and ruled alike are equally subjected. In the Islamic state, the sacred *Shariah* is the sovereign. This prevents tyranny, lawlessness and social anarchy.

The result of Islamic teachings is to strengthen and cement all the human ties without which society collapses. The foundation of human society is the family. Islamic teachings place great stress on the

necessity for marriage, condemns celibacy and monasticism and makes every form of sexual relationship outside of marriage a serious crime deserving of the harshest legal penalties. In order to discourage all temptations for illicit sex, Islam demands modesty and decency in dress, sobriety and dignity in behaviour and bans the free social intermingling of the sexes. All forms of obscenity, vulgarity and frivolity in the amusements are forbidden and the young esteem the old with respect. Older people are urged to treat children with love and affection. Husbands are taught to be kind and considerate to their wives and wives, loyal and obedient to their husbands ; Children are taught to obey their parents in all except that which is sinful and even if parents be unbelievers, children are still obliged to treat them with cordiality and respect. Islam cements not only kinship ties but provides for mutual help and compassion with neighbours and all brethren in faith. Muslims retain with non-Muslims the common ties of humanity and the *Shar'iah* grants to all non-Muslims living under Islamic rule, their rights to the protection of their lives, property, their own religious laws and the right to perpetuate their religion and culture by living in their own autonomous communities and educating their children in their own schools. Even those non-Muslims who commit overt hostile acts against Muslims are entitled during *Jihad* to be treated with justice and fairness. Islam divides men only on the basis of their belief. Islam

recognizes no distinction for treatment of men because of social status, class, race, cultural or national origin. Nationalism and Islam are irreconcilable. Thus Muslim societies are to this day free from the greatest curse of the West—racial discrimination.

Despite the decay of Muslim civilization and the corruption of so many Muslims swayed by alien ideologies, Islam is still an active and vital force in the world today, the only formidable potential rival to the atheism and materialism of contemporary culture, boldly challenging all it stands for*. Furthermore, the bulk of the simple, common people and even a considerable number of the modern educated youth still retain their love and zeal for their faith and want it to prevail as the decisive factor in their individual and collective life. Thus if the non Muslim finds the forces favouring Islam weak at present, he should understand that this is not due to any intrinsic deficiency or inadequacy in its teachings but only to the lack of effective organization and leadership.

The learned orientalists and shrewd politicians of the West are thoroughly aware of these facts. Hence, the special departments in universities and seminaries scattered throughout Europe and America dedicated to understand Islam only to enable its enemies to destroy it. These "Islamic Institutes" and "Islamic Research Centres" are now

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* The valiant resistance of the *Mujahideen* of Afghanistan against the tyranny of Soviet Russian military occupation is proof of this.

busy establishing their satellites in one Muslim country after another, the purpose of which is to subvert the Islamic cause from within and frustrate any attempts for a genuine Islamic renaissance.

After I embraced Islam I was dismayed to find certain scholars and political leaders within the Muslim community openly collaborating with the Christian and Jewish orientalists in repudiating the injunctions of Holy Quran and Hadith as obsolete and no longer relevant to the modern age. I knew that our so-called "progressives" must be traitors because their views as expressed in their public utterances and writings did not at all differ from the non-Muslim "specialists" on Islamic affairs and also because the former never fails to receive the most enthusiastic support from the latter. So dismayed was I by the anti-Islamic propaganda that had been fed to me since childhood that as soon as I embraced Islam, I was determined to compile a book exposing the full ugliness of this malicious prejudice for what it is. Hence this book, the fruit of many years of study in New York and Lahore, as the end result.

MARYAM JAMEELAH
(Formerly Margaret Marcus)

Muharram 10, 1401
(November 19, 1980)

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this collection of review essays is to provide the student with a full understanding of the ideological weapons of the orientalists which are being deliberately used to mislead the Muslim intelligentsia into cynicism, heresy and apostasy. This work is essential to help rescue the modern educated Muslims from the fallacy of accepting these unscrupulous scholars as the supreme authorities on Islam. Lastly, it is intended to show the Muslim reader how the West sees us.

Prior to the middle of the 19th century, the bulk of Western literature attacked Islam on the purely theological basis of Christian dogma. However, as the Christian missionary enterprise became increasingly identified with the aims of British and French imperialism, the emphasis gradually shifted from the religious to the secular. For a long time, the former was completely mixed up and confused with the latter. At the turn of the 20th century, the favourite technique of the missionary was to claim that Christianity was responsible for all the achievements acredited to the Western way of life. Thus Christianity and Western civilization are inseparable and indistinguishable. The

theological values of Christianity became more and more subordinate to this theme.

Since the end of World War II, the Christian pretence has been almost entirely discarded in favour of pure, unadulterated materialism. Islam is no longer condemned because of its rejection of the Trinity, the Divinity of Christ or the dogma of Original Sin. It is no longer a question as to which are the true attributes of God, which scripture the most authentic Divine revelation or the validity of Muhammad's (peace and blessing of **Allah** be upon him) prophethood. Rather, the entire concept of the Prophethood, revelation, the Hereafter and indeed, all belief in a God Who actively intervenes in human affairs is rejected on principle. The literal acceptance of every word of the Quran as the direct Word of Allah, the complete and final revelation which can never be abrogated nor superseded combined with the obligation to obey the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet down to the last detail as its only authoritve interpretation, which provides Islam with an inpenetrable armour against alien and hostile philosophies possessed by no other religion, outrages the "Islamists" in Europe and America. Islam is the first and foremost target of all anti-religious propaganda because it vehemently rejects moral relativity and staunchly continues to uphold the transcendental ideal.

Contemporary materialism, especially that based on the teachings of Karl Marx, assumes that moral

and aesthetic values are limited to time, place and circumstance and continually subject to change in the course of human evolutionary progress. According to this view, religion is purely a human institution invented by man to be the servant of society at a given stage in its history. Because religious laws are allegedly no more than social laws necessary for the society at its particular stage of evolution, there is nothing unchangeable, eternal or permanent. In other words, there is no such thing as absolute truth because religion is no more than the prevailing norms of social behaviour. The materialist consequently cannot accept any religious doctrine as the unalterable nature of the religion concerned unless it is actually practiced by the community which claims to be its followers. The dogma of "progress" originally derived from Darwin's theory of evolution and applied to sociology by Herbert Spencer and Karl Marx, identifies the latest, the newest and the most "up to date" with that which is best, most "advanced" and most desirable. Consequently, religious trancendental ideals are condemned as medieval, stagnant and reactionary while "scientific" materialism is eulogized as the acme of enlightenment and progress. Even though the most confirmed athiests are compelled to confess that science has thus far failed to disprove religion, neverthless it is glibly assumed that its applications to practical daily life have rendered it unnecessary and irrelevant.

In describing traditional Muslim society prior

to modernization, Westerners love to dwell on its "backwardness" its "stagnation" resulting from enslavement to oppressive traditions which have long outlived their usefulness. At best they depict Islamic teachings appropriate for primitive *beduin* of seventh-century Arabia. Although Western historians are now generally willing to recognize the greatness of Islamic civilization a thousand years ago and grudgingly acknowledge its contributions to medieval European learning, they assert that Muslim glory has departed forever, its creativity utterly exhausted since the 13th century. The "antiquated" way of life of traditional Islamic society is held responsible for the weakness of the Muslim countries today with their poverty, ignorance, disease, apathy and backwardness. Therefore, they conclude, the only road to progress is an uncritical adoption of Western materialism.

The Western world continues to fight Islam with increasingly sophisticated weaponry. On the advanced level of scholarship, Islam is being bombarded by no less than eight American and European periodicals devoted entirely and two particularly to Islamic studies. The former are: *The Muslim World*, (Hartford, Connecticut), *Middle East Studies*, (New York, N. Y.), *The Middle East Journal*, Washington D. C. and the latter are *Journal of the Oriental Society*, (New Haven, Connecticut), and *American Near Eastern Studies*, (Chicago).

The Western publishing houses print a steady

stream of literature dealing with Islam and the Muslim peoples. Unless the publication is a pure edition of a text by a classical Muslim author or a translation of one, it bears definite marks of antagonism and prejudice characteristic of Western attitudes to Islam.

That the Holy Quran is the work of Muhammad, that the Hadith literature is forged ; that Islam is a mere politico-economic outburst by impoverished beduins rather than a religious movement, that Islam stifled the artistic creativity of the people it conquered ; that Islam is nothing but the current practices of its present people ; that it is superstitious, fatalistic, that is unscientific, un-modern, and opposed to development ; that it stands in need of the same reformation Christianity underwent : that the best in Islam is Sufism with its individualism, anti-*Shari'ah* emphasis on the falleness of man and his need for a master-saviour, and the repudiation of the warlike and exclusivist Sunnism ; and above all, that Islam stands on an inferior moral level with its materialistic conceptions of paradise and low status of women, that its prohibition of interest is anti-industrialization, its puritanical and anti-alcohol ethic is against urbanization and modern liberalism, its dogmatism is anti-progressive, and it drives its miserable and vanquished people into psychosis by teaching them that God is on their side and that He is the author of history—all these falsehoods are current in

practically every Western presentation of the religion, culture, history and civilization of Islam.

In another dimension, Western works spread the nationalist and secularist diseases, teaching that a Muslim is an Arab, Persian, Turk or Indian before he is a Muslim. Their long emphasis on Persian studies is designed to separate *Shi'ah* from *Sunni*, to teach that Islam as given by the Prophet is desert-crude, that Persian *Shi'ah* esotericism had refined it and made it viable. Their enthusiastic defence of Turkish Kemalism pleads incessantly that Zyia Gokalp and Mustafa Kemal Ataturk were reformers long overdue and their opposition to Pakistan is dictated by the lesson that the Muslim must give up his will to sovereigntty and be content to live as a vanquished minority. Most recently, Western preaching has taken the line of ecumenism and the claim that Islam—without reform —is incapable of co-existence with other religions. All this is done in English books and periodicals without challenge or rebuttal.

During the long period the Muslim countries were ruled by Europe, their educational systems fell completely under the sway of the conquerors who took great care that new generations would be thoroughly convinced of the invincible supremacy of modern Western civilization and taught them to despise all the cultural values Islam stands for. In this way the European masters successfully created within each Muslim country, their puppets. When political freedom was at last granted to the

colonial possessions, the leadership automatically fell into the hands of this same westernized class which today dominates all Muslim countries. Their anti-Islamic activities receive the fullest moral and material support from the United States, Great Britain, France and Russia. Whenever they achieve any particular success, they are rewarded with encouraging pats on the back.

Some time ago, a distinguished British orientalist from London University, Professor J. D. N. Anderson, while visiting Lahore, addressed a large Muslim audience at Punjab University, extolling the Arabic-speaking countries for their "brave attempts to reconcile the *Shar'iah* with the demands of twentieth-century civilization. The Arabs of Western Asia, he concluded with exaltation, have at last "seen the light"—that unless the *Shari'ah* is drastically changed to conform with Western concepts of jurisprudence, they cannot "progress." He was especially enthusiastic over how President Habib Bourguiba had out-lawed polygamy in Tunisia by declaring that since the equal treatment of plural views demanded by the Quran is allegedly impossible, polygamy is henceforth prohibited by Islam ! A brilliant feat of *ijtihad* indeed ! Commented Dr. Kenneth Cragg, a well-known English missionary : "Whatever may be thought of the exegesis, the result is highly desirable,"*—highly desirable for him and similarly interested parties

* *The Call of the Minaret*, Kenneth Cragg, Oxford University, Press, New York, 1956, p. 14.

although even he admits the intellectual dishonesty involved.

This is but one illustration of the intimate collaboration between the orientalists and our home-grown modernists. From this kind of activity, the real motives of orientalism are exposed and we can see how deep is their hatred for Islam and the Muslims.

Since the second world war, the orientalists and missionaries have shifted their efforts from trying to change individual Muslims and convert them to their views to changing Islam itself through providing it with a totally different interpretation and launching an organized movement for its reconstruction from within. Thus one missionary writes :

> "If the missionary is to be sensitive to the attitudes of reverence and humility wherever they are already found, he must be no less sensitive to the various reform movements in Islam and be ready to cooperate with them whenever it is possible and suitable to do so. Reform movements are earnest attempts to re-interpret religious teachings in the light of present experience, or to interpret new experience in the light of religious teachings, and they are therefore of primary importance for the missionary. It is possible that one of these reform movements will have more significance for an eventual Muslim understanding of Christ than can now be imagined. It may even be

> that in the next few years, the chief contribution of the missionary in Muslim lands will not be so much the conversion of individual Muslims as the conversion of Islam itself. Here is a field of opportunity which cannot be neglected. An interesting line of investigation would be to study whether it is necessary for a Christian to love Muslims but hate Islam or whether it is possible to love Islam too and work for its regeneration."*

Almost all the recent works by orientalists have adopted this approach. It is not surprising therefore to find our own self-appointed reformers using the same methods.

What then should be done about this ? Ban these books ? However objectionable they may be, I am firmly opposed to the banning of books. To ban a book only makes the forbidden fruit more alluring. Such purely negative measures are not only futile and ineffective but by making these works inaccesible to mature intellectuals, writers and leaders, they defeat their own purpose by keeping them ignorant of what is being thought and done in the West and thus encourages an attitude of isolationism, complacency and apathy. Even if the circulation of these books can be stopped within the country, it must be remembered that beyond these constricted borders in every other country throughout the world, they are being

* *Towards Understanding Islam*, Harry Dorman, p. 125.

read and studied. What therefore has been accomplished by the banning of Philip K. Hitti's *History of the Arabs* on the pretext that it contains some defamatory passages on the Quran and the Holy Prophet ? Although that is true enough, the fact is that Hitti's *History of the Arabs* and Carl Brockelman's *History of the Islamic Peoples*, however prejudiced, cannot be dislodged as the standard works of reference on the subject by mere Government decree. They will continue to be regarded as the final authorities until something better is produced to replace them. The only way to counter falsehood is with the truth and it is the duty of our scholars to set their minor points of disagreements aside and collaborate selflessly to produce an entire library on history, sociology, anthropology, psychology and biology from the Islamic viewpoint and expose the fallacies and defective scholarship of the orientalists. The only way to crush a false idea is with a better idea based on logical and persuasive reasoning.

It is the duty of all Islam-loving scholars to unanimously assert the absolute eternity, universality, self-sufficiency and total independence of Islam from man made philosophies. All attempts by self-appointed "reformers" to undermine the validity of any of these concepts should be straightforwardly condemned by the *ulema* in an official *Fatwa* as heretical, if not tantamount to apostasy. The unanimous condemnation by the *ulema* representing all recognized schools of thought of the

modernist movement as apostasy will effectively and quickly dispel all the confusion and doubt cleverly planted in the minds of our college youth as to what Islam is and what it is not. The absence of such a *Fatwa* will strengthen the sophistry of the orientalists and missionaries that Islam has no fixed teachings of its own but can be virtually *anything* that the Muslim-named in power wish. As much as the invocation of heresy has been abused in the past, this does not at all refute its necessity in cases like this where it is entirely justified.

Is Orientalism then totally evil ? The answer is a qualified no. A few outstanding Western scholars have devoted their lives to Islamic studies because of sincere interest in them. Were it not for their industry, much valuable knowledge found in ancient Islamic manuscripts would have been lost or lying forgotten in obscurity. English orientalists like the late Reynold Nicholson and the late Arthur Arberry accomplished notable work in the field of translating classics of Islamic literature and making them available to the general reader for the first time in a European language. In general, the orientalists do their best work in the field of translation. Those who are content to restrict the scope of their studies to description sometimes produce very useful, informative and enlightening books. Trouble arises when they over-step their proper bounds and try to interpret Islam and events occuring in the Muslim world in

conformity to pre-conceived notions. Worst of all are those orientalists who insist on prescribing for us how we should solve our problems and what we should do with our religion.

On numerous occassions we Muslims have protested against the manner in which Islamic teachings are deliberately distorted and misrepresented by scholars who should know better. Again and again in the cause of human brotherhood and international harmony, we beg for their sympathetic understanding. The sooner we face reality and realize why we are asking for the impossible, the more readily and effectively shall we be able to defend and propagate what we cherish above life itself.

ISLAMIC HISTORY THROUGH THE LENS OF ORIENTALISM

The late Dr. Philip K. Hitti, professor Emeritus of Semitic Literature at Princeton University had for decades enjoyed international esteem as the most authoritative Islamist in the West. Formerly the Director of Princeton University's programme in Near Eastern studies, more than any other single personality, he is responsible for the trends of orientalism in America today. Born in a Lebanese Christian family, Dr. Hitti received his higher education at the American University of Beirut and then migrated to the United States in 1913 where he earned his Ph.D. at Columbia University two years later. A regular contributor to encyclopedias and scholarly journals, his best-known work which has long been included among the prescribed texts in colleges and universities throughout the world is his voluminous **History of the Arabs.** However, the book under discussion* now is a much smaller one entitled **Islam and the West** which highlights in bold relief, the most important points of contact between the two rival civilizations from the medieval period to the present. Although **Islam and the West** is obscure compared to The

* *Islam and the West*, An Historical, Cultural Survey, Philip K. Hitti, D. Van Nostrand Co., Inc., Princeton, New Jersey, 1962.

History of the Arabs, it has been selected for analysis here because, being brief and concise, the author speaks his mind on the same subject more freely and openly.

At the very outset, Dr. Hitti argues that the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was an imposter. The narration of his life gives the reader the impression that he had carefully planned in his mind the entire scheme beforehand. In commenting on the events following the *Hijrah,* he writes :

> In Medina gradually the seer in him recedes to the background, the politician, the practical man of affairs, emerges. A change in the character of the revelations is noted. Those fiery passionate incisive ones emphasizing the oneness of God, His attributes, and the duty of man towards Him and expressed in rhymned and musical style, now yeild to the verbose, prosaic ones dealing with such matters as ritualistic fasting and prayer, marriage and divorce, slaves and prisoners of war. (p. 11)

Of special note is the cynical language used here. With all his pretensions to learning, Dr. Hitti has utterly failed to appeciate the real significance of the *Hijrah.* In Mecca the Holy Prophet was a preacher only but in Medina he organized the faithful into a strongly-knit community, thus translating his preaching into practice. What took place after the *Hijrah* in Medina proved beyond doubt to non-believers as well as believers that Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ranked as the greatest law-giver in history.

Dr. Hitti cannot for give God for having spared the life of the Prophet from his would—be assassins in Mecca because it was in Medina where the historic Islamic community was born. The purpose of the later *Surahs* is to implement the early ones. Unfortunately, that simple fact is not understood :

> The sources of the Koran are unmistakable—Christian, Jewish and Arab heathen. Hijaz itself had Jewish but no Christian colonies, but had Christian slaves and merchants. It was surrounded by centres whence Christian ideas could have radiated into it. The Prophet had two Abyssinan slaves, his muezzin, Bilal and his future adopted son, Zaid. He also had a Christian wife, Marya the Copt as well as a Jewish one, Safiyah born to one of the Medinese tribes he destroyed...Drawn second-hand from heresay, the Koranic material does not distinguish between what is canonical and what is not. In the story of Joseph, for instance, Potephar's wife invites to a party those women whose tongues were wagging about her affair with Joseph* and when their eyes fall on him, the knives in their hands fall on their wrists rather than the fruit they were eating. Jesus speaks unto mankind in the cradle and fashions out of clay, a living bird which has a parallel in the apocryphal Gospels of Infancy. Jesus' crucifixion is disclaimed but not his ascension. Not only is his virgin birth accepted but his mother's seems to have some superhuman feature where, however, she is confused with Mary, the sister of Aaron. Another confused biblical character is Haman, the favourite of the biblical Ahaseuerus who is made the Minister of Pharoah. More serious than such slips are verses reflecting the weak spots

* The Quran never mentions this "affair" because there was none. It was, on the contrary, Zuleikha who became infatuated with Joseph, (peace be upon him).

of Muhammad's career and character. Surah 33 verse 37 was revealed to justify Muhammad's marriage to the wife of his adopted son, Zaid. Surah 53, verses 19 to 23 were revealed to withdraw an earlier recognition of three Meccan goddesses as intercessors with God. Only part of his revelations were recorded in his lifetime; the Text was not finally "canonized" until A.D. 651. The miraculous character of the Koran relates not only to origin and contents but to form. How could an unschooled man produce such a work that is not only insuperable but inimitable. Even if men and jinn were to collaborate, they could not produce the like of it. Muhammad was authorized by God to challenge his critics to produce even one comparable Surah. (X: 39) The challenge — as expected—was never successfully defied. Especially when chanted does this holy book seem to exercise by virtue of its rhythm, rhyme and rhetoric, a quasi-hypnotic effect upon its hearers even though they but dimly understand its meaning. The impact is more on the emotion and imagination than on the intellect. (pp. 14-16).

Thus the Quran is discredited as a forgery. According to Dr. Hitti, Islam was merely the Judeo-Christian heritage "Arabicized" and "nationalized". (p. 12).

How can the genuine prophets of Allah be distinguished from the imposter? The most unmistakable sign is the contrast in personal character :

On the 9th of Ab in the year 1626 in the city of Smyrna (Turkey) a son was born to a family of Spanish Jewish origin and he was named Sabbetai Zevi. The date is significant for, according to an ancient Jewish legend, the Messiah's birth is connected with the date of the destruction of the second temple in Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

The child was given the usual Jewish education. He had an exceptionally keen and receptive mind but on emerging from boyhood, he found less interest in Talmudic study and more in the Zohar and its cabalistic commentaries. He was handsome and a born leader. Before long, a group of young men crowded about him and he secretly initiated them into the mysteries of the Cabala. He considered his thoughts too deep and his life too pure for marriage.

Cabalists among the Jews had calculated that the Messianic year would be 1648. Christians had fixed the year for 1666. All the misfortunes which came upon Central and Eastern Europe during that period served as so much proof that the Messianic era was approaching. Since the Messiah's arrival was to be preceeded by war and pestilence, men's minds were prepared for something unusual.

Finally when the year 1648 came, he boldly took the step which he had long been plotting and which was to mark him as being on terms of unusual familiarity with God. Standing before the Torah in the synagogue Sabbetai Zevi pronounced the name of God as it is written, not as it is always spoken by Jews. Shocked by the blasphemy, the rabbis of Smyrna excommunicated him. Sabbetai Zevi lost no opportunity to advance his cause. In the presence of learned men and cabbalists in Salonika, he suddenly produced a marriage canopy and a scroll of the Torah and went through a marriage ceremony with the Torah as his bride. Again, his audience was more shocked than impressed and Sabbetai Zevi was forced to wander further.

In Cairo, he finally found an environment fitted for his purpose. The wealthy Raphael Joseph Chelebi supported in his home a number of pious followers of the teachings of Isaac Luria, the German-Jewish mystic who

believed in the transmigration of souls. Sabbetai Zevi soon found a place among them. When Chelebi sent a mission to Jerusalem for the purpose of distributing charity, he picked Sabbetai Zevi. To the starving mystics of the Holy City, he appeared literally a divine messenger.

Sabbetai Zevi now entered upon his real activity. As the news spread among the down-trodden, helpless, miracle-hungry Jews of Europe, it was greeted with a frenzy of enthusiasm. At last the age of misery was coming to an end. People danced in boundless joy. Many practical men of affairs hastily disposed of their possessions and laid in supplies for the journey to Palestine which they believed the Messiah would soon order them to undertake.

As the fateful year approached, Sabbetai Zevi was compelled to take action. He announced that he was going to Constantinople where at the mere sight of him, the Sultan would give up his throne and Sabbetai Zevi would become king of kings. When the ship, crowded with his followers arrived at the Turkish port, Sabbetai Zevi was arrested and imprisoned. The visit to the Sultan would come later, he announced. In the meantime, he held regular court in the fortress within which he was free to move about. Jews from Europe, Asia and Africa arrived to pay homage to the Messiah, Sabbetai Zevi. His Prophets issued commands and proclamations to Jews all over the world.

Sabbetai Zevi was finally taken before the Sultan. Challenged to prove his boast or suffer the death penalty, the would-be Messiah abandoned all his claims and promises and accepting a petty post in the Sultan's court, even consented to become a Muslim. With his conversion Sabbetai Zevi disappeared from the scene of Jewish life.*

* *The Decadence of Judaism in our Times*, Moshe Menuhin, Exposition Press, New York, 1965. pp. 281 - 284.

Here all the unique characteristics of the imposter are laid bare ; the most outstanding being his failure to persevere under persecution and even more significant, to do any work to support his claims. The same deficiences of the Jewish imposter are equally manifest in the career of the infamous Muslim imposter—Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian.

The genuiness of Muhammad's prophethood is proved by the fact that he revolutionized life over a huge portion of the world and secured the love, loyalty and devotion unto death of so many millions for fourteen centuries. In contrast to the imposter, he successfully implemented all that he taught. And most conclusive proof of the truth of his mission was that those closest to him — the *Ahl-i-Bait* (people of his household) believed in him most and had the highest reverence for his personal character and achievements. Yet Dr. Hitti cannot accept that devotion as justified by the "facts".

> Though born within the full light of history, the historical Muhammad eludes us. His first biographer died in Bagdad about 140 years after his death and even that biography has survived only in a later recension by Ibn Hisham who died in Cairo in 833. By that time, biographers were already writing about their hero as they thought he should have been, not as he was. Veneration for the founder of their faith and the creator of their glory had passed through the stage or idealization into idolization and at least in folk religion, in adoration. (p. 9). Two devices worked out by the early Muslim community served to loosen the rigidity of Islam's beliefs and practices. Words were put into the mouth of the Prophet

or acts ascribed to him which it was thought he would have done and said had he been confronted with a particular situation. The authority of the Hadith, be it recalled, is second only to that of the Koran. Because it is a congregation with no centralized religious authority, consensus of the community fills that deficiency. To bolster further the authority of public opinion, a Hadith was ascribed to the Prophet ; "My community shall not agree on error". Through this device, the miracles of Muhammad were accepted, the cult of saints with its concomitants of shrines, pilgrimages and vows was universally adopted ; circumcision to which there is no Koranic reference, became a counterpart of baptism in the Christian church and coffee—first considered a form of wine—developed into a national drink. Expediency supplied what authority lacked or decried. (pp. 22-23).

In order to discredit the life and works of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), nothing is mentioned at all about the scrupulous and meticulous science of Hadith developed by Bukhari and Muslim which examined the authenticity of each tradition far more thoroughly than is customary for ordinary historical documents.

In discussing the *Shar'iah* pertaining to polygamy, theft usury, gambling and drinking, Dr. Hitti triumphantly concludes :

> Modern Islamic society has practically outgrown the Koranic legislation. (p. 21).

Thus Islam is presented as purely man-made—a curious mixture of Judaism, Christianity and Arab paganism. The Holy Prophet Muhammad

(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is described as a self-deluded epileptic with his teachings and practical works divested of all transcendental value.

The same treatment is meted out to subsequent Islamic history :

> Arab historians, mostly theologians, had a simple explanation for that spectacular expansion from a hithero to internationally insignificant Arabia resulting in the utter destruction of the greatest power in the East and striping the greatest power in the West of its fairest provinces. It was all providential, in line with the clerical explanation of Christianity's spread and with the Hebrew interpretation of the conquest of Canaan. The motivation, we are assured, was religious—to propagate the faith. The fact is that the motivation was primarily economic. The surplus population of a desert peninsula had to seek elbow—room in adjacent lands. The lure of booty did not entirely escape the early historians of conquest. The Islam that first conquered was not the religion but the state—not Mohammedanism but Arabianism. The Arabians burst in upon an unsuspecting world as a nationalist theocracy, seeking a fuller material life. Two or three centuries had to pass before Syria, Iraq and Persia presented the aspects of Muslim lands. When their peoples flocked to the fold of Islam, they were in general motivated by self-interest — economic, social and political. (pp. 26-27).

Thus does Dr. Hitti deny the moral and spiritual validity of Islam as the primary attraction for outsiders to its fold. If the real explanation for the rapid expansion of Islam was economic, how to explain the fact that under the Prophet Muhammad

(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the Right Guided Khalifs, these God fearing *Mujahidin* had no desire for the fruits of this world but fought and were slain to attain the fruits of the Hereafter. Had they fought for selfish reasons, they would have never achieved the discipline, the morale, the cohesiveness and the spirit of sacrifice that vanquished their adversaries who were far more numerous and better armed. Had Islam been synonomous with Arab nationalism, what would attract the Abyssinian, Hazrat Bilal, Hazrat Suhail, the Roman, or the Persian, Hazrat Salman (may Allah be pleased with all of them) to become the most devoted companions of the Prophet ? If non-Muslims embraced Islam for worldly reasons, what could stop them from becoming apostates when the circumstances became adverse and after centuries of hostile foreign domination, how to explain the phenomenon of nine hundred million Muslims today ?

In discussing the contributions of Islamic civilization to humanity, Dr. Hitti devotes several pages to describing of "The Arabian Nights" which however, popular they may be in the West, enjoy absolutely no literary reputation in the Arabic-speaking world ; he is very much interested in the extravagant splendour of the various monarchs. their concubines, the lovely Persian and Byzantine singing-girls and the ruddy wines of Syria or the "contributions" of Spanish Muslim minstrels to European folklore. The really valuable gifts of Muslim scholars to Europe in mathematics, science,

medicine, education and philosophy are considered worthy of only passing mention. He fails to point out that not until the advent of Muslim civilization did the world know of free education, the university which was also tuition-free, free hospitals and dispensaries as public institutions. He never enlightens his readers that under Muslim rule, pharmacy first became a separate specialized branch of medicine nor does he inform us that Islamic civilization gave us the format of books as we use them today. In antiquity, the pages of books were pasted end to end to make very cumbersome scrolls but the Muslims cut the pages of their books, sewing them together which made for much easier reading and handling, thus giving a tremendous impetus for the spread of knowledge. And without the zero which made the development of higher mathematics possible and the discovery of the use of paper, civilization could not exist as we know it now. The most precious gift of all—the contributions of Islam itself to the moral welfare of humanity are completely ignored.

> The question arises as to how much of the scientific knowledge discussed above seeped down into the lower strata of society. The answer is simple ; not much. As a Book religion, Islam did encourage study of the Koran and memorization of prescribed prayers but other than for mere elementary study in connection with mosques, facilities for education were largely inaccessible, if not unavailable. The masses must have lived in utter ignorance, poverty and misery. (p. 47).

Contrary to this black picture, it is fairly

certain that in and around such large cultural centres as Baghdad. Damascus and Cairo and especially in Muslim Spain, the incidence of literacy was very high. From Cordoba to Delhi, the Muslim world was filled with academic and intellectual activity.

Although a half page is given over to the life and works of al-Ghazzali, the contributions of Ibn Taimiya who was deeply learned in Jewish and Christian lore and superior as a scholar to al-Ghazzali, are not mentioned. Dr. Hitti is also silent in regard to the great *Imams* of Islamic jurisprudence—Ibn Hanifa, Shafei, Malik and Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, Not a single world about the contribution of the *Shari'ah* to the progress of law.

Dr. Hitti rejects outright the uniqueness of Islamic civilization which according to him is a mixture of Semitic, Greek, Roman, Persian and Indian elements transmitted by the vehicle of the Arabic language. Although Islamic civilization was not impervious to outside influences, it shaped what was swept into it by foreign conquests according to the absolute values of the Holy Quran and *Sunnah*, thus despite minor local variations, achieving a remarkable cultural homogeneity from Morocco to the Philippines.

After a brief paragraph on the "black-out" of stagnation and backwardness of the Arab world under Turkish rule where his criticism of the Turks is unjustifiably harsh, the narration in the conclud-

ing chapter, enthusiastically lauds the westernization of the Muslim countries, taking for granted without question that all these innovations are indispensable for the ultimate welfare of the people. As an historical episode, Islam may have been good for its time and place but now its worldly glory is past history, it has become obsolete and irrelevant.

> Modernization on the intellectual-spiritual level involves secularization. Secularization means more than separation between church and state. It replaces providential interpretation of historic events and current happenings to the individual with rational interpretation based on physical and psychological forces. Hardly a current issue of an Arabic newspaper lacks repeated mention of the name of Allah in connection with reports of birth and death, sickness and health, fortune and calamity, success and failure—a relic of bygone thinking. (p. 93).

In order words, the author is openly pleading for the adoption of atheism as a prerequisite for "progress". Although this "progress" is the official creed in the socialist Arab lands today, despite the frantic campaign for westernization combined with the most savage persecution of all Islamic elements and the virtual liquidation of the "reactionaries"—that is, the entire religious leadership—nothing has been achieved except the growing hostility between the rulers and the ruled*. Consequently, the Arab lands are among the most politically unstable countries in the world. Weak and impotent, they are

* The popular struggle of the Muslims in Syria against the tyrannical *Ba'athist* regime is an outstanding example.

dependent economically and militarily upon America and Russia.

> High in importance among the boons bestowed by the West was modernized education. Education deals with intellect wherein all change begins. As the nineteenth century passed into the twentieth. Moslem educational institutions were still in the traditional pattern, mirroring the stagnant culture. Seeking knowledge was more of a mechanical process aimed at and ending in acquiring amassed facts (or rather what was considered facts) as if the universe were a static entity. Throughout, the student was a passive agent, a recipient of the authoritative communication of teacher and text. The quest for knowledge was not a joint teacher-student embarcation on a voyage of discovery. Memorization was the password ; research, experimentation, criticism were not in the vocabulary. The retentive faculty was oversaturated but the sense of curiousity famished. (p. 89).

As a graduate of the American University of Beirut, Dr. Hitti was an outstanding product of this "boon". Yet here he can only repeat the same prejudices of the orientalists who have gone before him. Nothing creative or original can be found in this book. It appears that the criticism he directs with such vehemence against the traditional *madrassah* is more appropriately applied to the indoctrination imparted to students by himself.

THE CHRISTIAN VIEW

What is the theological, historical and cultural relationship between Christianity and Islam in the context of the contemporary scene ? One of the most revealing attempts to provide a meaningful response to these questions can be found in the works of Dr. Kenneth Cragg* who is beyond any doubt among the most thoughtful missionary scholars of our day. Dr. Kenneth Cragg, an Anglican clergyman, succeeded Dr. Samuel Zwemer as co-editor of the missionary quarterly, **The Muslim World**. He has served as Adjunct Professor of Philosophy at the American University of Beirut and Professor of Arabic and Islamics at the Hartford Seminary Foundation in Connecticut, U.S.A. He has worked in close coordination with the study programme in Islamics of the Near East Christian Council with its headquarters in Jerusalem where Dr. Cragg was Canon of St. George's Cathedral. He now lives in retirement in England.

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* The books by Dr. Kenneth Cragg under discussion are :
The Call of the Minaret, Oxford University Press, New York, 1956.
The Dome and the Rock : Jerusalem Studies in Islam, S.P.C.K ; London, 1964.
Islamic Surveys-3 : Counsels in Contemporary Islam, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 1965.

As a missionary, Dr. Cragg is psychologically compelled to support the view that Islam is a distorted, defective faith and ultimately invalid spiritually :

The prophet's biography is finally the story of a crucial choice, no less crucial than that implicit in the contrasted Gospel saying. "The cup that my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it"? It is the decision arising from the question, how should Prophethood succeed ? What is the final relation of the messenger of God to the people to whom he is sent when they forbear to hear ? The Muhammedan decision here is formative of all else in Islam. It was a decision for community, for resistance, for external victory, for pacification and rule. The decision for the Cross—no less conscious, no less formative, no less inclusive, was the contrary decision. It is impossible to say precisely when the choice became final in Muhammad's career. Some have argued a marked deterioration in the character of Muhammad in the Medinian years. That is probably too simple, mistaking a symptom for its source. The deeper truth is that at some point, Muhammad elected for a religious authority, armed with sinews of war and means of government and that the decision worked itself out in character, conduct and destiny.*

Here Dr. Cragg has understood the most fundamental difference between Islam and Christianity and perhaps the major source for their divergence both in doctrine and in history.

Many Muslim writers, past and present, upbraid Christianity for its failure to discipline and control Western-civlilization. It has not checked imperialism or prevented exploitation. It is, on the contrary, implicated

* *The Call of the Minaret*, p. 93.

as aiding and abetting Western dominance in the world. . . The Church in the New Testament is conceived as a society within a society. It is never properly thought of as co-terminous within history with the whole of human society. It is built upon the idea of redemption. It therefore involves an analysis of human nature as wayward and sinful. There is the "natural man" in his recalcitrance and the "spiritual man" in regeneration and pardon. The Christian understanding of how man is perfected is that it happens personally and through faith. Goodness, truth and love are not actualized in terms of the natural man of but of new-made man. These conditions of the transition, being personal, are not social. Christianity belongs to and inheres in people who believe. It is never co-terminous with any given society or culture. Things are not the final locus of Christianity. People are. *The Gospel does not suppose that man is perfectable by law.* The Christian mind believes that the society of the redeemed will always stand within the community, never identical with the whole. *That whole, the secular world, must be free to organize itself.* We cannot by legislation or assertion identify it with Christ. This fundamentally is the reason why the Christian faith recognizes an ultimate distinction and in that sense a separation of Church and State. Christianity agrees with Islam that the claims of God are total and that nothing is exempt from their relevance. *It does not agree that they can be met in a religio-political order externally established.**

Yet the learned missionary-scholar can still insist that :

The "separation" (secularism) does not mean the non-relevance of Christ to life ; it does not mean abdication of responsibility ; it does not indicate indifference ; it is

* *Ibid.*, pp. 322-327, abridged, italics mine.

not a withdrawal into a private and selfish piety; it is not desertion of social duty. It is a refusal to regard man as being in no need of redemption or the Kingdom of Heaven as unconditioned by repentance and a new heart.*

The historical record of European Christianity is irrefutable proof that this is exactly what the acceptance of secularism on principle by the Church has amounted to. Christianity cannot be separated from the Christians and from the historial record of the Church and that record is dark indeed. Leaving theological arguments aside, from a pragmatic point of view, the real test of the validity of Christianity versus Islam is how the respective faiths have worked out in practice during the course of history. Secularism is evil because it means toleration of social and moral evils as inevitable. Hypocrisy, corruption, cruelty, greed and obscurantism are writ bold on every page of the 2,000 year history of Christendom, not as isolated incidents during the lives of isolated individuals but as the *consistent, dominant pattern* which continued unabated throughout the millenium when the Church held Europe under its absolute sway. Dr. Cragg thinks that merely to condemn such events as the Crusades as fundamentaly un-Christian is sufficient to disentangle himself from any responibility for them. He does not seem to appreciate the fact that these evils were merely the natural fruits of the tree. A study of the history of the Roman papacy, past and present, will convince any student of this fact.

* *Ibid.*, p. 325.

Dr. Cragg would explain these evils away by asserting the inherent sinfulness universal in human nature. Since Christianity has from the inception of the organized Church under St. Paul, had nothing but contempt for the religious law as spiritually useless, this means that there is no divine guidance for the Christian in his collective life; therefore politics, economics, relations between believers and non-believers and international conduct are guided by opportunism and expediency. Although every Muslim is by no means an angel and though our record too, has its stained pages, whenever evil and corruption raised their heads, it was always vigourously opposed by the *Mujaddidin* whom Allah sent at all critical times to rennovate and purify the practice of the faith. In contrast to the history of the Christian church, although deviations did occur, honest and courageous *ulema* always resisted and condemned them openly. Never were they incorporated as in Christianity, into the faith as essential doctrine. Despite all the imperfections which are inevitable in this imperfect world, traditional Muslim society throughout the centuries of its ascendancy, was free from the curses of nationalism, imperialism, class conflicts, racial discrimination, inquisitions heresy hunts, routine torture of war and political prisoners, bloody sectarian strife, large-scale illicit and perverted sex, sex crimes, illegitimate children and alcohol addiction which cast their shadows over Christendom. This phenomena is no accident but

a natural result of the implementation of the all-embracing divine commandments of Islam which, enjoying until the very recent past, universal, reverence proclaims the rule of Law supreme and leaves nobody, whether he be a believer or a nonbeliever, outside the scope of that law. The reverence for Divinely-revealed law, made the traditional Muslim society, despite its political instability, strongly knit. The social disintegration so marked in the contemporary Christian West was absent in the Muslim East.

The contrast between the conduct of Richard the Lionhearted and Salah-ud-din Ayubi during the Crusades was not so much due to the individual superiority of the latter over the former but rather because the former did not feel accountable before God for his dealings with the "heathen" which Christian doctrine, lacking any Divine legal precedents for international relations, left this matter solely to his personal discretion while Salah-ud-din Ayubi had only to follow the precedents of all God-fearing *Mujahidin* in the laws of the sacred *Shar'iah* pertaining to *Jihad*. Salah-ud-din's victory was not that he drove out the crusaders and recaptured the *Bait ul-Muqaddas* for the Muslims ; his real triumph was his treatment of the defeated enemy with justice and humanity under law, thus practically demonstrating to the whole world that *Jihad* has no place for the horrors of ordinary warfare.

Here is only one example how the learned clergyman distorts the whole meaning of Islamic teachings :

> Even supposing, as the argument runs, the prohibitions in the Quran and Hadith as they have been interpreted are valid, times obviously change ; they change, indeed because of the very success of Islam. A society like that of the Hijaz in the Prophet's day, was so prone to idolatry that only the most ruthless prohibitions would suffice. With such *mushrikin* as the Quraish, nothing would avail but a total and absolute veto on pictures of living beings. It would, however, be folly to treat a Muslim society today after centuries of Islamic *tauhid* with the same stupid severity. Such a policy would be equivalent to saying that Islam had failed and that no Muslim could be trusted not to take a picture for an idol.* A ban, once necessary, can be safely lifted ; to dispute it would seem to disqualify Islam itself. (p. 131)...The Muslim fear of idolatry is always sound. But the security against it is not in the banning of artists any more than God's unity is safeguarded by vetoing the Incarnation of Christ into man. It is a true recognition of Him in undivided love. That love may include unashamedly the help and benediction of the senses and the arts. (p. 135).**

Like so many of his collaborators in orientalism, Dr. Cragg reserves for himself the supreme authority to judge the practices of our faith, point out where we are wrong and how we should change

* The excessive reverence accorded to portraits and statues of great leaders in Muslim lands conspicuously displayed in public places like Kemal Ataturk, the late ex-Shah of Iran and the late President Nasser of Egypt is an excellent example of idolatry.

** *The Dome and the Rock : Jerusalem Studies in Islam.*

and improve upon them. Aside from this, his argument itself is no argument at all. The struggle for moral righteousness and purity of faith begins and ends in the lifetime of each individual. Mankind's spiritual and moral progress is not at all assured as is advancement in the physical sciences by the accumulated knowledge of the race. The struggle for spiritual progress must begin anew with each generation. Because human nature has remained the same since the emergence of man, every individual, regardless of time and place, is subjected to the same trials and temptations to commit evil as his forebearers. With the role of the picture so glaringly evident to all in the epidemic of vulgarity, obscenity and immorality,* surely this prohibition is even more indispensable for the world today than it was for pagan Mecca under the Quraish.

Again, Dr. Cragg's prejudices are evident in his ridicule of the Hereafter depicted in the Holy Quran as "lacking the beatific vision as the ultimate ground and meaning of heaven":

> Nor is there the thought of growth in service nor yet purgation in remorse. Rather, the picture is of a secure and static bliss versus a pointless hapless anguish. The stark literalism of this eschatology was of course the central quality of Muhammad's preaching. As with the Quranic teaching on man, idols, sovereignty and law, it simplified all issues into the sharpest and most absolute form, leaving

*This can be seen everywhere in the world in lurid cinema posters and pornographic magazines displaying nude photos.

> to subsequent theology the tasks of penetration into mystery which its own sheer dogmatisms lacked leisure or temper to accomplish.*

Thanks to the explicitness of the Quran, made even more explicit by the Hadith, in contrast to the vague, ambiguous and complicated theology of the Christians, Muslims were spared the centuries of doctrinal hair-splitting and sectarian strife which marred the entire history of the early Church. The moral law derives its strength from the doctrine that this world is the field for sowing and the world to come the harvest where one consumes the fruit of his work on earth. In other words, this life is the only opportunity we have to earn the pleasure of Allah through our faith and good deeds; all these opportunities end at death forever. If one believes that he will have another chance to repent after this life is over, the loop-holes for evil and corruption grow numerous and the whole force behind the moral law vanishes.

Despite his intense interest in Christian theology and his strenuous attempts to make it comprehensible to his readers, the most striking characteristic of Dr. Cragg's works is his distortion of the teachings of Islam through the medium of "modernism." He especially favours those modernists who are portray Christian influence :

> Muhammad Kamil Hussain (born 1901 in Cairo) is a "lay" writer, a surgeon of distinction, an educationalist with active interests in literature, archaeology, psychology

* *The Dome and the Rock : Jerusalem Studies in Islam*, p. 211.

and ethics. Here is a voice refreshingly original, insisting that there is an Islam which disqualifies Islam, not merely in that it is obscurantist, or illiberal or socially effete or archaic or retrogressive or unproductive or whatever else may be laid against its effects but because it is a religious way of escaping from religion, a form of worship which eludes encounter with God, a sin that is in the very sanctity. Here is the deepest form of self-awareness when the religious man knows that his very sanctuary may be a hiding place from his Lord.*

In this brief quote, the tactics of the missionary are laid bare. The book referred to is "*The City of Wrong*" in which the author has described the persecution of Jesus Christ on Good Friday and compared our *ulema* to the Pharisees. Since this book so well served his purposes, Dr. Cragg himself translated it from the original Arabic into English. Here it can be seen how obscure scholars who are regarded as useful for the missionaries, are magnified by such publicity out of all proportion to their actual significance.

Here is yet another example of the same kind of mischief :

It may be retorted that historic Islam is readily recognizable and that there is no problem of identity-belief in one God and Muhammad as his Apostle. Yet a revered Muslim expounds Islam without a single reference to the Prophet.**

The "revered Muslim" is Abdullah Yusuf Ali who is widely known for his English translation

* *Islamic Surveys 3 : Counsels in Contemporary Islam*, p. 107.
* *The Call of the Minaret*, p. 29.

and commentary of the Holy Quran. But the pamphlet referred to above and listed in the footnotes at the end of the chapter, entitled *The Fundamentals of Islam*, published in Geneva in 1929, has been out of print for more than fifty years ! So obscure is this particular work that I have never met any Muslim, however highly educated or fluent in English he may be, who has ever heard of it.

Like all his colleagues in orientalism, Dr. Cragg is not only convinced that a thorough-going adoption of Western culture by the Muslim world is inevitable, but he is actively participating in the process of westernization to hasten its completion as speedily as possible. Although he vigourously upholds the validity of transcendental doctrine and morality within the sphere of Christianity, he refuses to defend this concept on behalf of other faiths :

The argument from necessity is more convincing than the argument from freedom. For there can be little doubt that the conservative is theoretically right in resisting what is un-Islamic in its origin. On the understanding of a thousand and more years that it derived from revelation, Muslim law cannot suddenly and blandly affirm that its true basis is pragmatic, prudential and worldly-wise. Nevertheless, time compels modification, adaptation and enlargement. The modern mind is right in its instinctive awareness that Islam must either baptize change into its spirit or renounce its own relevance to life. Since it cannot do the latter, it must somehow do the former.*

The correct reply to this statement of course, is that the Islamic movement does not accept the

* *Ibid.*, p. 17.

status-quo as final and that any religion worthy of the name LEADS the people and cannot make any claims to truth if it must be a slave of the "times." The philosophical conflict here is the struggle between the upholders of transcendental law and morality and those who disparage these as purely relative, and subjective and limited to time and place which undermines the whole concept of the moral law itself. The fallacy that morality and law are utterly subservient to the mundane conditions of society and have no value beyond time or place is the very essence of the materialistic concept of history propagated by Karl Marx and Hegel. What a paradox indeed to find this Christian leader propagating dialectical materialism while the Church has, at least in principle, always upheld the transcendental ideal. If transcendental morality is the very basis of ethical monotheism, this truth must necessarily be universal. Yet while defending the transcendental ideal in regard to Christianity, when discussing the impact of modernism on the Muslims, he preaches materialism :

> Therefore we Christian missionaries must be ready sympathetically to hear Islam equated with true democracy, perfect socialism, innocuous capitalism and abiding peace. It would, of course, be entirely unjust to stand by Lord Cromer's famous and foolish dictum that Islam reformed is Islam no longer. We have neither the right nor desire to insist that Islam shall remain perpetually what we have at one time thought it was. Like all living things, it changes, decomposes to recompose. While never ceasing to be itself, it can often puzzle us with what that self is becoming. This realization of Islam on the move is no small element in our Christian duty of understanding and discernment in our would-be relationship in Christ with the people of the minaret.*

This concept of moral relativity explains the strange terminology which prevades these writings as well as the works of so many other orientialists. Dr. Cragg does not recognize one Islam but many. He glibly refers to "the old Islam," "the medieval Islam," the "traditionalist Islam," versus the new, liberal and progressive "Islam." Likewise he can discuss "Arab Islam," "Turkish Islam," "Indian and Pakistani Islam" because "Islam" and "Muslim" are used interchangeably with no distinction drawn between the two.

> There was once a recognizable boundary, even if only geographical, by which the Islamic could be known for certain and the hostile identified unerringly. An old tradition quietly identifies it with the turban. "The turban," declared the Prophet, "is a frontier between the faith and unbelief." How impossible to draw that line now ! Today fewer and fewer Muslims wear it ; it has become among the youth in urban areas as remote from daily life as a tonsure in the West.** The puzzle of secularity has pushed far into the Muslim scene and soul. It is just the quality of simplicity about the Quran's knowledge of good and evil, its plain discrimination between the faithful and the faithless, the loyal and the hypocrite which is so great an item in its assurance and guidance. But how is it ascertainable now and how

Ibid., p. 208.

This is a direct recsult of tho Westernization and Secularization of Muslim socioty.

enforceable ! Who shall say with the old clarity and ruthlessness where and when there is apostasy ? "Tis all confusion, all coherence gone !" one might almost say with the English poet, John Donne, echoing different bewilderments.*

The above quote is another excellent illustration of the author's rejection of transcendental values. Typical of his friends in contemporary orientalism, he denies any recognition of Islam with its distinctive, fixed teachings, institutions and culture as an objective reality. According to him, Islam is simply what Muslims say it is and President Habib Bourguiba is as valid a spokesman as Maulana Sayyid Abul Ala Maudoodi ! In this relative view, Islam is merely what Muslims do and however fragrantly the secular-minded flout the commandments of the Holy Quran and *Sunnah* should not concern anybody. Asks Dr. Cragg :

> Should it not be the first concern of Muslims that God be most great even over Islam ?**

Thus does Dr. Cragg arbitrarily pit Allah against His own Revelation as if the respective claims of the two were irreconcilable.

Dr. Cragg makes no attempt to conceal his unrestrained enthusiasm for the forces working for westernization in Muslim lands.

> The story of the American - Arabian Oil Company writes itself not only in the names of the great but also

* *Islamic Surveys 3 :* Counsels in Contemporary Islam, pp. 181-182.

** *Ibid.*, p. 107.

> in the lives of the humble. Bedouin and townsmen in considerable numbers have entered the employment of the Company or have found steady livlihood in subsidiary enterprises arising from its presence or its initiative. New skills are learned accordingly and practiced for high and constant wages, replacing an economic form of life which was hitherto precarious and primitive. New attitudes are discovered as the new wage-earners encounter the cinema, television and the radio with novel methods of leisure-recreation and a new dignity or dimension in personal living. These accelerating changes influence more than they yet include and penetrate in repute were they do not yet penetrate in fact. The present generation has modernized faster than a whole score of its predecessors. One of the largest groups of Americans resident on non-American soil can hardly be set down in so static a territory without pointing many parables of technology and opening new vistas to watchful, wistful minds. These are the new horizons of the contemporary scene. An Aramco employee familiarizes himself and his context with new and incisive notions about man and his technical potentiality to make his habitat serve his needs ; about a money economy and its advantages ; about a society in which women and marriage are governed by other concepts, where leisure, literacy, comforts and security replace the old perpetual struggle and the old uncertain life.*

As a staunch Christian, one would expect from a scholar of this stature, some discussion of the moral and spiritual anarchy, the communal disruption and the ugly sores of social disintegration which inevitably follow in the wake of such abrupt change. Yet with childlike faith, he assumes that this

* *The Call of the Minaret*, p. 9.

cultural revolution is an unmixed blessing for the population.

> Secularity weighs heavily upon the world of Islam, the more so for the devastating speed of contemporary changes and the onset of revolutions-material, industrial, nuclear-which in their Western matrix spread themselves feverishly among the generations. In some places today, the single father-son sequence marks a transition from the economic and social patterns of Abrahamic antiquity to those of the tanker jetty and television.*

Dr. Cragg claims that modernity has made Islamic institutions obsolete and useless :

> Nor are the provoking vistas of wealth entirely westward and outward. Technology has its local Midas touch, especially in the oil of the Middle East. Where soil seems all too often an equation in poverty, oil in an ever more avidly mobile world, is now a sort of liquid gold. Having in mind, the massive revenues acquired from it in the lands of Islamic genesis, what becomes of the Quran's anxiety about usury ?**

Of special note here is the cynicism expressed in the choice of language. Such irrelevant remarks amount to no geniune logic at all.

> The literature of social concern in contemporary Islam makes the more urgent the need for integrity of mind in the search for the answers within the economic and social institutions of Islam. Too much writing on *Zakat* and the Quran's veto on hoarding eludes the hard realities of the money world and the complexieties of life. Its comfortable panaceas amount too often to an evasion of thought and action.***

* *Islamic Surveys*-3 : Counsels in Contemporary Islam, p. 9.
** *Ibid.*, p. 8.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 192.

By "integrity of mind," he means a contemptuous repudiation the most of essential Islamic institutions and a subservient mentality that does not doubt the infalibility of western civilization as the only route to progress in human welfare.

Like all his predecessors and present-day collaborators, Dr. Cragg is convinced that the success of his missionary enterprise depends upon the adoption of the Western outlook. Why ? Let him supply the answer in his own words :

> We have insisted that the Christian's duty in this matter of Muslim religious toleration, legal and actual, is primarily to exalt and serve the ideal. Freedom of conscience has an absolute value which transcends all special pleading. We are not seeking such changes primarily for the benefit of potential converts to Christianity. Nor should thinking Muslims resist them for the sake of deterring such converts. The matter is not one to be judged by particular consequences for or against. We had rather say, it is to be judged for its absolute consequences in purer religion and more validy based allegiance—consequences which cannot be outweighed by numbers lost or gained. It is clear, nonetheless, that such freedom in Islam would, in saving the quality of Muslim conviction, also lift a heavy incubus from Christian evangelism. Inquirers would no longer be intimidated by domestic consequences ; the Muslim convert would no longer be under inappropriate difficulties as to marriage nor would he have to face disinheritance. Considerations of legal status would not inhibit the free pursuit of religious inquiry. The ex-Muslim would not be worried or persecuted into mental instability nor become a rootless protege of some alien power. It may be argued that such a hope is dim and

distant and therefore impractical ; our retort is that we have not advocated it on the grounds of expediency. There can be no doubt that the ultimate hope of the Christian mission is for just such a change in Muslim attitudes to toleration.* It may be long or longer before particular areas begin to feel the liberating consequences of such a change where even now to evince the least interest in Christianity is to invite personal tragedy in some form. If the reader tends to be skeptical of this possibility, he may be reminded that we are writing about patience and that the principle here can be argued from a valid extension of Quranic and traditional Muslim teaching.* *Also it let it be remembered that the strong pressures of secularism, undesireable as in some respects they are, tend in the same direction.***

Nothing is said about the necessity for this "toleration" to be mutual. The author is silent on th e actual policy of the Christian missionary enterprise in regard to their treatment of the Muslim population in the countries particularly in Africa and Indonesia, where they are most active. In African lands like Ethopia where the Christian missions actively aided the autocratic rulers like the late Emperor Haile Selassie in the [merciless genocide of the Muslims, "Christian toleration" was exposed at its worst. Dr. Cragg therefore urges "tolerance" only for Muslims. Christian missions are evidently free from that obligation.

* This is not true. The Quran and Hadith declare unequivically that Islam alone is the Truth and that all other religions and philosophies are false and misleading.

** The rapid impact of Christianization and secularisation upon Indonesia, the largest Muslim State, is an outstanding example of this eror.

It is equally obvious that the author supports secularism because it is the most potent force for the social and cultural disintegration of the Muslim community. No community, particularly a community founded upon an ideology which wants to survive and grow, can willingly relinquish its membership to a arival group. Furthermore, Islamic teachings regard apostasy as exchanging Truth for error and since this Truth is based on absolute values given to mankind by Divine revelation, it can never be regarded as a mere matter of opinion. The religious license that would allow a Muslim to convert to Christianity without any social penalties can only be brought about through communal disintegration and total indifference. The aim of every human culture and religious system has always been, and will continue to be, to secure for the future through parental training and education the loyal adherence of the succeeding generations. If Christianity is no exception this rule, how can the learned clergyman urge us to do what is psychologically impossible ?

In the chapter "The Call to Service" in **The Call of the Minaret**, Dr. Cragg praises the activities of the various Muslim governments as supplementing the philanthropic work of the missionary. "Their coming is to be heralded with grateful satisfaction, for the Christian seeks no monopoly rights over human healing where no monopolies can ever be desired."*

* *Ibid.*, p. 230.

But the question immediately arises as to what arethe actual results of such government schemes he so highly praises. Let another veteran missionary who is able to see the fruits of this "progress" with a more perceptive eye, inform the reader from his own experience what has really happened :

> We might add that of the 1,400 government doctors, only 600 are divided among 4,000 villages. These doctors are poorly accomodated and receive a low salary. Their sole aim is to get as much money as they can outside their salary and to leave the village as soon as possible.
>
> There are some of them who are not ashamed to exploit the sickness of the *fellahin* in the most cynical fashion. It happened that I found myself not long ago among a group of doctors in the health department inspector's office of a *mudiriya*. One of these doctors had just received an appointment for a distant village and was very much affected by the news. A colleague was endeavoring to cheer him. "Don't worry. You'll be perfectly all right in that village. I stayed there two years myself and I was better off than I would be in town. These dogs of *fellahin*, if you know how to handle them, you can get a hundred a month out of them".
>
> In another village, the doctor would not sign a declaration for a natural death or hand over the burial certificate before he was paid five pounds. The deceased's relatives had no choice but to pay.
>
> Another will never travel to the neighbouring village, through he has charge of it, until he has made sure the patients are numerous enough to subscribe communal fees in a lump sum to be paid beforehand.
>
> Another doctor used the ambulance of his clinic whenever he went to the cinema in the neighbouring small

> town. Another entrusted his practice to an untrained assistant and settled in town ; he came out to check things occasionally once or twice a week.
>
> A certain Salib Sami worked with an irrigation pump in a field near Nukhayla. He was once gravely injured and relatives carried him to a nearby hut. The doctor was sent for, but he refused to attend the patient unless he was paid five pounds in advance. In spite of their efforts, the poor *fellahin* could collect only half the fee. The doctor did not go. Salib died.
>
> The *fellah* goes to the doctor only when he is very ill because it means the loss of the day's wages, the bus fare to the hospital as well as the price of the medicine. If the medicine is not to be found in the range of the pharmacuticals of the clinic, he must buy it commercially for what is to him a great price.
>
> When he reaches the hospital, there is already such a crowd of patients that he must go before his turn if he is to get home that night and so he must tip the doorkeeper. Finally he is face to face with the doctor who takes two minutes to hear his symptoms and write a prescription without examination. At first he may have honestly tried to be good doctor and to reconcile quality and quantity but soon enough he comes to act as do his colleagues, to hand over the prescription after one or two questions, singling out for attention only those who come recommended or are obviously very ill indeed.*

The ugly picture depicted here is but the natural and inevitable product of the materialistic outlook which in the absence of any nobler ideals, saturates these unscrupulous professional people

* *The Egypian Peasant.* Father Henri Habib Ayrout, Beacon Press, Boston,1963, pp. 75-77.

with the most callous selfishness and avarice, virtually nullifying all the so-called advantages of modern science, medicine and techonology they supposedly represent.

> This, like all else, turns finally on compassion. To persons and their poverty, people and their hopes, the responsibility of power relates. The ultimate test of all dogmas and religion lies in its writ of compassion running through the forms and patterns of the social order and the dispositions of political authority.*

Yet at the same time, Dr. Cragg defends despotism on the pretext of necessity :

> The current suspension of democratic forms arises not only from the fact, evident everywhere in the world, that government in these days of high dams, flooding populations and industrialization must be direct and efficient. It springs also from the fact that democratic processes to be secure, require standards of general education and traditions of citizenship which often do not obtain and for lack of which the democratic processes play into the hands of exploiters and vested interests. Moreover, viable and valid democracy demands a vigourous party system and the concept of the dignity of the opposition—elements still wanting, for a variety of reasons in the structure of most Islamic communities.**

In other words, in the mind of this Christian leader, military dictatorship in Muslim countries can be condoned for its contempt of the rule of law and Muslims should be denied their human rights because of poverty illiteracy, and "backwardnes."

* *Islamic Surveys* 3 : Counsels in Contemporary Islam, p. 192.

** *The Dome and the Rock* : Jerusalem Studies in Islam, p. 189.

> Conservative religion suffers many frustrations. Almost everywhere political opportunity is wanting. In this situation, what some writers call the neo-Islamic when they mostly mean the old Islamic, can easily lapse into quietism and aloofness and stagnate in neglect of its real stakes or it might conceivably erupt into violence—the sort of violence engendered in frustration which the present "secular" monopoly of power holds firmly in subjection. Can it blossom into responsible leadership of mind unless it has the stimulus of actual opportunity to shape things and until the persistent dichotomy of educational background is more radically overcome ? For these custodians of the old Islam are still largely naive or irresponsible in their Islamic judgments and as James Baldwin has it in a very different context ; "It is the innocence that constitutes the crime"—the innocence of an inadequate perception of issues. It is, however, in large measure more sinned against than sinning in that it has been shaped by dogmatic slumbers and enfeebled by political impotence save among the Wahabis and Sanussis. This intellectual situation in conservative Islam is the major factor in the current crisis of leadership.*

The "realism" to which Dr. Cragg refers means to reverse all Islamic teachings wherever they conflict with contemporary practice. In other words, he is asking us nothing less than the abject acceptance of the status-quo as inevitable, irreversible and final. The "reactionaries" adhearing to the "old Islam" are represented as the "rear-guard" of obsolete dogmaticism and ritualism and their cause, hopeless. If his claims for Christian compassion

* *Islamic Surveys*-3. Counsels in Contemporary Islam, pp. 187-188.

are genuine, should he not openly protest against injustice everywhere? But he does not !

The Herodian and the Zealot persist. There was much to be said for the parallel when Arnold Toynbee drew it a quarter of a century ago defining his Hellenist precedents in these terms :

"Zealotism—a form of archaism evoked by foreign pressure :

Herodianism—a form of cosmopolitanism evoked by the same agency.

Yet is there not coming to be an outmodedness about the analogy itself, the archaists so to speak becoming themselves archaic ? In this generation, Muslims are in charge of Islam, however circumscribed with the queries the keeper and the kept may be. Islam is now in full command of itself and Muslims have long ceased to be merely Europe's 'eastern question' There is about the panorama of lengthening independent Islamic statehoods, something to make the Zealot a little late in his defiance of the foreign. If Herodianism consists in being cosmopolitan and absorbing the irresistible, then we are all Herodians now.*

Every statement here is misleading. Even the context of the analogy is false. Under Greek and Roman occupation in the struggle between the "reactionaries" and "progressives" in Palestine, the former's victory was complete. Hellenistic cosmopolitanism, which seemed so invincible during the lifetime of Jesus Christ (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), vanished into oblivion while the zealots compiled the Talmud which preserved the religious and cultural identity of the Jewish people

* *Ibid.*, pp. 182-183.

intact for another two thousand years. We Muslims can well draw a lesson from that. Secondly, despite the nominal independence of the various Muslim states, Islam is as politically impotent now as under European colonial rule a century ago, the only difference being that prior to the second world war, foreign imperialism was administered direct while it is now perpetuated indirectly through the economic and military vassalage of the native rulers who are Muslims in no more than name.

It is the duty of the Muslim scholar to make Jews and Christians understand that only in Islam can the true prophetic tradition be found. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is reported to have declared that the best *Jihad* is to speak the truth in the presence of an unjust ruler and sacrifice one's life for that cause. The records of Muslim history tell us that all the outstandingly pious have had the courage to do this. Nor is that courage not to accept evil as the status quo but to speak the truth regardless of personal consequences lacking in the present age. Like all the prophets and *Mujaddidin* of the past, Badee-u-Zaman Said Nursi of Turkey, Shaikh Hassan al Banna of Egypt and Maulana Sayyid Abul Ala Maudoodi of Pakistan all rejected the *fait accompli* and fearlessly called the despotic rulers to account for their misdeeds. Jews and Christians can find this prophetic spirit in their own scriptures,

distorted as they are, but it has disappeared from practical life among them for many centuries. Only in Islam does it continue undaunted. If Dr. Cragg is as broadminded as he claims to be, here he should look for his lost heritage.

THE JEWISH VIEW

At a time when the Jewish menace has never been a greater threat to world peace or even human survival, a scholarly work on the cultural relations between the Jews and Arabs (or more appropriately, Judaism and Islam) is indispensable. It is most enlightening to read the Jewish viewpoint on this subject, however much we as Muslims are compelled to disagree. The author of the book under discussion,* Solomon David Goitein who was for some years the chairman of the School of Oriental Studies at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem is ranked by scholars in America as he is in Israel, among the outstanding Jewish orientalists.

At the outset, he vehemently denies the myth that the Jews were originally an Arabian tribe ; he points outs that in Biblical and Talmudic times, the bulk of the Bani Israil were farmers. Even the nomadic Hebrew tribes described in the Bible lived with their flocks of sheep and goats on the fringes of the desert. In contrast, the Arab beduin established themselves in the depths of the wilderness as camel breeders and merchants engaging

* *Jews and Arabs : Their Contacts Through the Ages*, S. D. Goitein Schocken Books, New York, 1955.

in long-distance international trade. This difference is clearly manifest in Jewish and Islamic laws and festivals. The Jewish calendar takes special note of the changes in seasons and the Talmudic law glorified the pastoral life while the Islamic calendar, being purely lunar, ignores the seasons as its festivals rotate round the year. The *Shariah* upholds commercial enterprise and the city life as the ideal. The Jews make provision for their harvest festival and weekly day of rest which are condemned by Islam as pagan relics. Goitein then goes on to describe how under Muslim rule between the 7th and 9th centuries, the Jews lost their identity as an agricultural people and became totally urbanized.

Since the most enduring achievements of the Jews after the Bible and Talmud occured under Muslim rule, the bulk of the book deals with the cultural relations between Judaism and Islam :

> Moritz Steinschneider, an outstanding German-Jewish scholar, in his *Introduction to the Arabic Literature of the Jews*, which he wrote at the age of ninety, compared the German-Jewish with the Arab-Jewish symbiosis, regarding the two as of equal importance. Here, however, I venture to disagree with the great master. Despite their great relative importance, none of the creations of the Jewish authors writing in German or conceived under the impact of modern western civilization, has reached all parts of the Jewish people or have influenced the personal inner life of every Jew to the profound degree as did the great Jewish writers who belonged to the medieval civilization of Arab Islam. The reason for this difference is self-

> evident. Modern western civilization, like the ancient civilization of the Greeks, is essentially at variance with the religious culture of the Jewish people. Islam, however, is from the very flesh and bone of Judaism It is, so to say, a recast, an enlargement of the latter, just as Arabic is so closely related to Hebrew. Therefore Judaism could draw freely and copiously from Muslim civilization and at the same time preserve its independence and integrity far more completely than it was able to do in the modern world or in the Hellenistic society of Alexandria. It is very instructive to compare the utterances of Jewish authors of the Middle Ages about Islam and the Arabs with those of the Jewish authors writing in German during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries which deal with the surrounding culture. For instance, *Germanism and Judaism* by Herman Cohen. In Cohen's books, Judaism is "justified" because it is regarded (rightly or wrongly) as essentially identical with the highest attainments of German thinking. However, most of the Jewish authors of the Middle Ages who wrote in Arabic, never had the slightest doubt about the absolute superiority of Judaism. I emphasize this fact not because I believe that such an attitude should be adopted in our own times but simply as an indication that Judaism inside Islam was an autonomous culture sure of itself, despite, and possibly because of its intimate connection with its environment. Never has Judaism encountered such a close and frutitious symbiosis as that with the medieval civilization of Arab Islam. (pp. 129-130)

Even more than their Christian counterparts, Jewish orientalists feel compelled to search for the "original sources" of the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and expound their conjectures as to how

he "borrowed" Jewish and Christian practices then in vogue. Of course, Goitein bestows upon Judaism most of the credit for the achievements of the Holy Prophet !

All this leads us to the great question : which religion or which sect served Muhammad as his immediate model or, since the Koran alludes in various places to persons who instructed the Prophet,* who were these teachers ? Why is it so difficult to find a solution to this problem ? The main reasons are these :

The Koran contains a huge mass of material which can be traced to both Jewish and Christian sources. This is true not only of biblical and apocryphal literature with which Muhammad might have been acquainted through Jewish and Christian channels but it also holds good for elements from the Jewish liturgy and lore which had found their way into Christian circles very early.

Moses is the predominant figure in the Koran. I would not like to lay too much emphasis on the quantitative aspect although it is impressive enough ; compared to Jesus who is mentioned only four times in the Koran during the Meccan, that is, the formative period of Muhammad's career, Moses', name occurs there more than a hundred times. Much more important is the fact that the stories about Moses are not confined to certain chapters but prevade the whole Koran and the idea of Moses, the Prophet with a Book, possessed Muhammad to such an extent that he immediately proceeded to produce a divine book of his own.

Although the general trend of Muhammad's ascetic, pietistic religiousity with its dominant note of dread of the imiment Day of Judgment seems to be more akin to

* False ! There are no such allusions !

Christian monastic piety than to rabbinic Judaism, the way out of the difficulty created by this apparently contradictory evidence, seems to be the simple assumption that the group of Jews who, we may suppose influenced Muhammad's beginnings. although they were basically ordinary Orthodox Jews, had themselves come under the influence of monastic piety and adopted some of its practices and also, some of its literature. To be sure, most, if not all of the ingredients of monastic piety which found their way into the Koran were already present in some form in early Judaism. Vigils are mentioned several times in the Book of Psalms and played a very important role in the life of the community of the Dead Sea Scrolls. In Talmudic times, however, study at night took the place of the nightly prayer. Prostrations were a characteristic feature of Jewish worship up to the second century. Later this practice was discouraged by the rabbis precisely because it was so conspicuously preached by the monks.

The solution I venture to propose for the question concerning the identity of Muhammad's mentors seems also to be the most plausible explanation of the undiluted and uncompromising attitude on monotheism maintained by the Prophet from the very beginning of his mission. This cannot be explained by his natural disposition or mood but could have been due only to a very strong influence by monotheists of such description-namely, Jews.

In conclusion, I wish to say this : Whether the solution I have proposed here for the problem of the origin of Islam is accepted or not, one thing is beyond doubt : the battle which Muhammad so gloriously and so easily won over his Arab compatriots had been decided many centuries before on the hills of Judea. (pp. 52-58)

Such are the views held by almost all Jewish

scholars today. Being himself a Jew, it is quite natural and understandable for Goitein to follow this line, for he could not accept the premise of the Holy Quran as divine revelation without renouncing Judaism and embracing Islam. However, the student has the right to expect from a scholar of this calibre to state without any distortion the true position held by devout Muslims on this question first before expressing his own ideas. In the Holy Quran, the Jews and Christians are constantly referred to as "The people of the Scriptures" (*Ahl al-Kitab*) and the close affinities of the Muslims with them are repeatedly affirmed. It is also a fact that in addition to the Bible, some of the same material in the Talmud and the Midrash is found in the Holy Quran and Hadith. Thus Jewish scholars immediately jump to the conclusion that Islam is merely a distorted version of Judaism. The only convincing and conclusive answer as to the origin of Islam is that given by the Quran itself. Since all the prophets of God preached the same message and the revealed Books taught the same Truth, the similarities between the Quran and the earlier scriptures are due not from borrowing but proof of their *common origin.* That the *Shar'iah* incorporates so much of the Mosaic law is not the result of what the rabbis allegedly taught Muhammad but because Allah revealed the same legislation of the older scripture again in its final form. Since Islam upholds transcendental values and absolute truth, the precepts revealed to Moses (peace be

upon him) were deemed by Almighty Allah to be just as valid when revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The mission of the Holy Prophet was not to invent a new religion but to confirm the eternal truth of the earlier revelations to the other Prophets of God. Thus did Islam affirm the ethical montheism and much of the law practiced by Jews while vehemently rejecting Judaism's over-emphasis on ritualism and its racist parochialism; Islam upheld the universality of the Christian message while condemning the pagan practices that had corrupted it almost from its birth.

How can we as Muslims affirm Islam as eternal and God given truth and refute the theories of the orientalists that the Holy Prophet's message was all borrowed second-hand from others ? To those skeptics who insist that the Quran is Muhammad's book and not Divine revelation, we may point out the every student of history knows artificial religious and philosophical systems have always failed. The *Din Ilahi* of the Emperor Akbar, which died with its founder, is sufficient proof of that fact. Eclectic systems dictated by expediency can never command the binding authority and universal reverence which Islam has held over the minds and hearts of so many millions for fourteen centuries.

Ever since the earliest days, the question has been raised as to whether the Quran was of divine or human

origin. The explicit and implicit testimony of the Quran is that the author is God Himself. It is never the Prophet who speaks in the Quran. The Scripture either refers to him in the third person or addresses him directly—O Prophet, O Messenger, We reveal to thee; We send thee, do this, recite this ; such is the language of the Quran.

The direct proof of the divine origin of the Quran is manifest all through the Scripture itself. It is also shown by the peculiar phenomena which accompanied every revelation of the Quran, according to the testimony of true tradition. The Prophet's contemporaries were objective witnesses of the visible, tangible and audible signs of the mysterious accompanying phenomena which made evident the real source of the Quran and opened the eyes of the truth-seekers. There was nothing voluntary about these phenomena, for the Prophet could neither avoid them when they came nor bring them into being when he earnestly desired to receive a message. On many occasions the Prophet sought a revelation but it was not given.

It is to the honour of Islam that the Quran records all hypotheses, reasonable or absurd, by which the contemporaries of the Prophet attempted to establish human origins for the scripture. If the origins were human, they must have come from Muhammad's environment, from other religions in that environment or from the meditations and reasoning of the human author.

It has been suggested that the Prophet gleaned his teaching from the reading of books recording previous revelations. But the Quran categorically denies that he knew how to read or write (XXIX : 48). Furthermore, the Bible was not available in Arabic until many centuries after the Prophet's time and the Bible in other languages was out of the reach of the common people. The few biblical ideals which may have circulated among the common people were so vague and often contradictory, that they

cannot be the basis for the precision, extensiveness, unity and vigour in the Quran.

It has been argued that in Muhammad's travels, he became acquainted with Arab tribes which had been converted to Christianity and got his ideas from them, but the Christianity practiced in that part of the world was so debased that it was indistinguishable from paganism. The fourth Khalif, Ali said that the tribe of Taghlib had taken from Christianity nothing but the habit of drinking wine.

Nor can it be argued that Muhammad was influenced by Jewish teaching after he came to Medina where he was in contact which Jewish scholars. Even before the *Hijrah*, the Holy History had been revealed in all its true details in the Meccan surahs and the Quran had condemned the believers in the Pentateuch as followers of satanic inspiration, unworthy of being accepted as teachers or examples (XVI : 63). In Medina, psychological attitudes on both sides made Jewish influence on Islamic thought practically impossible. The majority of the rabbis adopted an antagonistic position which was far from the benevolent attitude of teachers. Those of the Israelite scholars who were impartial, enthusistically welcomed the Prophet in Medina and declared their conversion to Islam, there after as disciples recognizing him as their Master. Between the two categories of the hostile and submissive Jews, there was no place for a third group of friendly tutors.

There remains the question as to whether or not he could have created the Quran by himself through the use of meditation and reason. To a limited extent, reason could have revealed the falseness of idolatry and the senselessness of superstition but how could it know how to replace them ? The Quran confirms that before the revelation, he did not know any book nor even the meaning of faith (XLII : 52). He could not possibly have guided others for

he did not even know how to guide himself in religious matters. He was ignorant of the the legislative, moral, social and ritual details which are included in the revelation of the Quran. It was not by the study of books but only by revelation that Muhammad could know God and His attributes. Only as it was revealed to him could he define the relation between God and the visible and invisible worlds and specify the future reserved to man after death.

It is edifying to know how the Prophet himself regarded the text of the Quran. He could not by his own will retouch it in the slightest ; he interpreted it exactly as any commentator would a text which was not his own. And when he postphoned carrying out any of its commandments even for a short time in order to treat kindly the souls of the faithful and to forestall the objections of adversaries, we see the Revelation reproaching him severely. Those reproaches he accepted with resignation and left engraved forever in the Text.

Nothing therefore has been improvised in the Quran. Everything was foreseen and formed as a whole and in every detail from beginning to the end, including the death of the Prophet. Who could have formed and carried out such a complete plan ? Who other than God from whom came this heavently mission ?*

Yet despite this irrefutable evidence which a scholar like Goitein must be well aware, he insists upon the student blindly accepting without question the assumption that all the common ground Islam shares with Judaism must be the result of deliberate imitation.

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* "*The Origin of Islam*" by Mohammad Abdullah Draz, formerly Professor of Quranic Interpretation at al-Azhar University, Cairo quoted from *Islām : the Straight Path*, edited by Kenneth Morgan, The Ronald Press, New York, 1958, pp. 23-29.

If, as we have seen, there is a very close connection between Muhammad's creation, the Koran and the religion of Israel, there is an even more amazing affinity between the fully developed systems of the two religions. A comparison between the rabbinical Judaism of the Talmud and the classical Islam of the orthodox jurists is extremely revealing, a fact which can hardly be due to chance. All the main characteristic features of their systems are identical or almost identical.

1. Islam, like Judiasm is a religion of *Halakha*, in Arabic, *Shariah* : that is a God-given law which regulates minutely all aspects of life : law, worship, ethics and social etiquette. *Halakha-Shariah* is the very essence and core of both religions.

2. This religious law is based on the Oral Tradition called in Arabic, Hadith and in Hebrew by words of identical meaning which authoritatively interprets and supplements the written law, in Arabic, Kitab and in Hebrew, Torah she-Bikhtav which comes from the same root-word.

3. The oral tradition falls into two parts, one legal in the widest sense of the word and the other moral. In both Muslim and Jewish literature, they assume the same form of loosely connected maxims and short anecdotes.

4. Although the Muslims had a State when they created their religious law, and although they had contact with the organized Christian churches, their *Shariah*, like the Jewish *Halakha*, was developed by a completely free and unorganized republic of scholars. Rulers in classical Islam might make decisions in regard to special cases but they never created or officially promulgated laws on their own. Nor did Islam ever have a hierarchy of religious dignitaries who decided

questions while sitting in official synods or councils as was the practice of the Christian churches.

5. In both Judism and Islam, the religious law took its final shape in the form of different schools or rites which originally represented the most widely accepted decisions or usages of one country like the Jewish rites of Palestine and Babylonia or Medina or Iraq with the conception common to both religions was that these schools and rites were all equally orthodox.

6. The logical reasoning applied to the development of the religious law is largely identical in Islam and Judaism which could not but have been the result of direct connection.

7. The study of even purely legal matters is regarded in both religions as worship. The holy men of Islam as in Judaism are not priests or monks but students of the divinely-revealed law. Thus the ulema in the Muslim community occupy the same place and perform the same functions as do the rabbis among Jews.

8. Muslim religious law developed mainly in Iraq, the chief centre of Jewish studies at that time. (pp. 59—60)

Again, the correct explanation for these similarities lies in a common origin rather than conscious, direct borrowing one from the other. Again and again throughout history it has been demonstrated how people sharing common beliefs can and do develop the same system of ideas independently. That is what happened to the adherents of both monotheistic faiths.

Proof that Islam was not dependent upon Judaism for its historical development is manifest from the differences between the two which are just

as striking as their likenesses. The concept of *Jihad* or the organized struggle of the righteous against evil which is repeated with such powerful emphasis in the Quran as one of its most important teachings can nowhere be found in Jewish literature. Likewise *Hijab* or the strict segregation of the sexes and the seclusion of women which is such an indispensable Islamic institution was not known to the Jews. Again, the *Shariah* demonstrates its superiority over Jewish law by asserting that drunkardness cannot be prevented without the prohibition of drink and by analogy, banning all intoxicants. The rabbis of the Talmud condemned drunkardness yet regarded a moderate indulgence in wine as inseparable from the good things of life. Wine also plays an important role in Jewish religious ceremonies and social functions. Anyone who is the least acquainted with Judaism knows how important is the meticulous observance of the Sabbath as day of rest for pious Jews which is wholly foreign to Islam. Although the Talmud has been revered by Jews as embodying a complete and infallible way of life ordained by God, nowhere in those ponderous volumes can any precedents be found for international law, the conduct of warfare and the relations between Jews and non-Jews, for the rabbis assumed that the Jews would always live as a small minority on the defensive within a non-Jewish state. Consequently, when the Jews finally did attain sovereignty in Israel, even the most pious among them did not feel accountable before

God in their dealings with the Arabs which are based on opportunism and expendiency only. By contrast the *Shariah*, which includes non-believers as well as believers within the jurisdiction of Divine law, offers the student very rich material on that subject.

Many pages of this work dwell at great length about the treatment of Jews under Muslim rule. Goitein readily admits that with few exceptions, the lot of the Jews under Islam was far better than their co-religionists in Europe. He correctly explains this difference in the fact that the *Shariah* recognizes the unchallenged right for the existence and protection of minorities belonging to other monotheistic faiths while the Church did not. He also rightly says that the sectarians tended to be the fanatical ones and not the Orthodox. He cites the cases of the Almohads and al-Hakim during the Fatmid period as examples of this fanaticism but he rightly points out that these were extraordinary incidents and that the "basic principles of Muslim law which recognized the right of existence of other monotheistic religions was as a rule, adhered to." (p. 89) Unfortunately, the author does not regard that principle as satisfactory. He condemns the attitude of the Islamic state towards the Jews not so much because they were mistreated but because it denied to them complete civic equality with the Muslims.

In Saudi Arabia Muslim law is still in full force.

Even a few years ago when the thousands of Americans stationed in Dhahran, the great airfield in eastern Saudi Arabia, wanted to build a church for their own use, they were unable to do so for, as we know, no new churches can be erected on Muslim soil. This and similar problems are, of course, minor issues. However, a far more serious affair is the professed aim of *al Ikhuan al-Muslimun*, which boasts of the allegiance of the majority of the Egyptian people, to reinstate Islam as the law of the State. If the *Ikhwan* and their counterparts in other countries, have their way, it would mean inexorably that Egypt, Syria and other Muslim countries would relapse into the position of medieval states with local Christians and Jews reduced to the status of second class citizens. The leaders of the Military Revolution understood this issue only too well in Egypt and fought *al-Ikhwan* although they themselves were eager to reaffirm their devotion to the religion of Islam.

For a religious law, i e. a law professedly made by God Himself can never be changed in such essentials as the position of the "unbelievers"; therefore the only way to honour it under entirely changed conditions is not to use it. The fact that canonic law - the law of the Roman Catholic Church - is nowhere in force where the masses professing Catholicism are concentrated has not impaired the Catholic faith but rather strengthened its hold on the believers. The introduction of modern civil codes in Egypt and Turkey has done no harm to Islam but rather saved it from becoming a target of justified criticism. The very idea that Egypt could give up its attainment made eighty years ago when a modern civil code was first introduced, sounds really preposterous.

This lapse into contemporary issues lends colour to the exposition of Jewish-Arab relations under Islam. As we have seen, the position of the Jews inside the Arab-

Muslim society was relatively better than that enjoyed by them in medieval Europe — but only relatively. In principle, they and the other non-Muslims were second-class citizens and consequently, their position was precarious and often actually dangerous. No discrimination on any grounds, religious or otherwise, can be the basis for a completely satisfactory symbiosis. (pp, 87 88)

This criticism is as petulant as it is misleading. He would delude us that persecution of minority groups is an exclusive product of medieval religious fanaticism unknown to the secular state in this "enlightened" twentieth century. Never has history witnessed more horrible persecution of minorities than in the so-called "progressive" countries today. Witness the deplorable condition of the native Indians in North and South America, the coloured immigrants in England, the black people in South Africa, the Soviet Union's discrimination against non-Russians, the genocide of the Tibetans by the Communist Chinese and the pathetic plight of the helpless Muslims in "secular" India who are subjected to massacre almost every day by Hindu fanatics. Is it not more natural and just for the inevitable divisions among men to be based on belief and ideology rather than race or nationality ? A man can change his belief but nobody can change his race. No government - whether secular or theocratic—which wants to survive, can willingly put the reigns of power into the hands of a rival group which does not subscribe to the ideology of that state. How else can a government function except through the support of those who believe in

its tenets ? Could the democratic Government of the United States of America allow a professed Communist to be elected President? Likewise, could a Communist state appoint an advocate of Capitalism as its Prime Minister ? Pursuing the same logic, how then, can an Islamic state be expected to permit key posts to be filled by disloyal Jews who oppose the fundamental premises upon which that system rests ? History testifies to the fact that nowhere have minorities enjoyed greater protection of their lives, property or enjoyed fuller religious and cultural autonomy than under Muslim rule.

If Goitein is not satisfied with that, it would be most instructive for him to contrast the prosperity the Jews enjoyed in Muslim lands with the misery of the Arabs in Israel today. The real test of a people and its ideology is its behaviour when it captures power. In the case of the Jews, power has transformed the persecuted into most savage of persecutors. The best documented work available on the subject, *The Arabs in Israel* by Sabri Jiryis,* a respected Christian lawyer, a native of Haifa and technically an Israeli citizen, makes dismal reading indeed, Sabri Jiryis shows us how all the most odious features of Jewish persecution in old Czarist Russia have been duplicated in Israel. In this connection, it is hardly a coincidence that most of the

* *The Arabs in Israel*, Sabri Jiryis, the Institute for Palestine Studies, Beirut, 1969.

Israelis in key Government posts were born in Czarist Russia. Now the Arabs are the ghetto dwellers, restricted by military rule to their "Pale of Settlement" and so severely discriminated against that it is extremely difficult, and often impossible for the Arab youth in occupied areas to secure adequate education and employment. According to Israeli law, the Jewish immigrant automatically achieves full-fledged citizenship the moment he touches Israeli soil while the indigenous Arabs who have continuously lived there for centuries, are legally aliens ! Sabri Jiryis published his book in Hebrew in 1966. Shortly afterwards it was banned. The author was then imprisoned.

> It is a great tragedy that the history of the Middle East is being marred by the present impasse of Jewish-Arab relations. Zionism, the ideal of returning the Jewish people to its country of origin and to the life of a normal nation on its own soil--certainly was fundamentally sound. Zionism was created to give a new chance of life to Jews who were persecuted or in danger of being persecuted ; to arrest the virus of anti-semitism in those nations where the Jews had lived and to bring prosperity and cultural vitality to the eastern shores of the Mediterranean. Many of these aims have been fulfilled. Over three million threatened by persecution in various degrees, have found a new home. Certainly it was not the Jews who opened hostilities against their Arab neighbours anywhere.
>
> (p. xi).........
>
> It is no use to argue that Zionism was - and still is a thoroughly humanitarian and pacifistic movement, created with the express intention, easily documented of destroying tensions between peoples. It is vain to add that the

> pioneers who made Zionism into a reality were a peaceful lot and therefore the whole disaster was the fault of the Arabs who opened attack on the Jews while the latter retaliated only very reluctantly after repeated and ever more dangerous challenges. All this is true but it does not do away with the actual situation which is a great tragedy for many on both sides of the frontier. (p. 232)

He goes on to list the antagonisms between Israel and her neighbours as follows : Israel is essentially a classless society while the Arab world was until recently feudal ; the gulf between the traditional Arab and the modern Israeli relations between the sexes and rigid etiquette observed by old-fashioned Arabs contrasted with the extreme informality of the *Sabra*. Who can possibly believe that these trivial things have any relevance to the issue, much less, are the real causes of the trouble ? On the very first page of the book the author declares his intention to discuss cultural affairs only and scrupulously avoid controversial political questions but whereas in this case, a consideration of the political issue is indispensable, it cannot be omitted without ludicrous results. Even if he insisted on avoiding the political aspects, it nevertheless would have been most appropriate for him to discuss it from the moral viewpoint. On what grounds do serious-minded Jews justify the dispossession of an entire people and their arbitrary deprivation of all political rights ? An analysis of this problem would be far more fruitful, but unfortunately he chooses to ignore it altogether as if it did not exist. Typical of exponents of Zionist propaganda, he

tells us that Arab oposition to Zionism was artificially created by a few selfish and corrupt leaders and that if the common Arabs had been left alone, they would have wanted nothing more than to live with the Jews side by side in peace! But now I raise the question if any other people elsewhere in the world found themselves confronted with the same plight as the Palestinian Arabs, would they not react in the same way? Is it not only natural and inevitable for a people - any people—to resist as much as they can, wholesale robbery on a national sale? And how can the Israelis ever feel secure living on stolen property?

> A bright spot in that dark picture is the fine spirit in which the youth of Israel bore, and still bears, the brunt of the battle, is facing a most sorrowful situation. I believe it is true to say that these young men neither hate the Arabs nor dismiss them lightly. They see rather in the present deadlock unnecessary disaster which most be fought through unremittingly until peace is achieved.
>
> If I may be allowed to conclude with a simile, Israel may be regarded as both the eldest and as the youngest brother in the family of peoples of the Middle East. It was in the existence as a nation with a state and a specific religion and literature long before any of the other present-day Middle Eastern peoples made their appearance; it bequeathed to them much of its spiritual heritage. On the other hand, it reemerged only recently as a nation with a state and language of its own.
>
> As eldest brother, it is obliged to be indulgent with the younger members of the family. This duty, I believe, it has largely fulfilled. As against the unbridled out bursts of defamation launched against it, a sober, objective and sometimes even sympathetic attitude towards the Arabs is to be found in the Hebrew press and literature.
>
> However, men have not only duties; they have rights. As the eldest brother, who has paved the way and suffered for it—the oldest son is often not the happiest in the family. Israel deserves a little consideration and even reverence. As youngest, it requires encouragement and even help—I mean, by the Arabs. This may sound preposterous taking the present sitution into account but not if we look forward to one or two generations.
>
> The great suffering of the Jewish people is not solely its own concern. Its sons have contributed immensely to the welfare of other peoples: it thus has the right that its own small home, whose creation was intended to put an end to that tragic anomaly, should be honoured and aided. Many people organized in the United Nations have indeed done so. It remains for Israel's neighbours to follow suit. I am convinced that they will, although this prophecy* may not be fulfilled for a long time. (pp. 234-233).

How best can Jewish-Arab reconciliation be achieved? The panacea proposed by Goitein is for both peoples to become devoted disciples of modern Western civilization and re-evaluate their spiritual heritage in that light. At last when they realize how much they share in common, they will presumably live as brothers happily ever after!*

In this ideal Jewish-Arab fraternity, where the Jews of course must dominate, Islam has no place.

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* Goitein's "prophecy" was fulfilled when President Anwar Sa'adat of Egypt under American pressure signed the Camp David Accord and his peace-treaty with Israel.

To make use of the good services of a Jew or Christian and and at the same time of hold him in a state of humiliaton, this was the normal attitude in the medieval Muslim state and other societies of a similar character. *The law of Islam—as any o ther law created over a thousand years ago—never can form the base af a sound modern society.* As a matter of fact, it is not in force as the basic law of the state in any Arab country except Saudi Arabia. However, such notions contained in the *Shar'iah* for example, its contempt for the unbeliever and particularly, the unprotected Jew, are naturally still widely alive. That the Jews should have achieved the creation of a state or the waging of a successful war, is of course, to many Arabs a particularly revolting idea. (p. xii).

It would appear that Islamic theology has exhausted itself and that those young Muslims who take religion seriously are more or less in the same position as their Christian and Jewish contemporaries ; they are beginning to find the realization of religion in social service ; but the question of a new formulation of religious experience is of as great an urgency for them as for others. Thus, beyond the borders of creed and states, a new common search for the eternal truth is starting. When and how this new search will become a social force subduing denominational and national fanaticism is still unknown. At all events, even in the sphere of religion, Israel is less isolated than it would appear to superficial observers. (p. 229).

And how most effectively to accelerate the processs of Islamic disintegration in Arab lands ? Goitein's first and foremost target is the Arabic language.

The Arabs have always been fervently attached to their language and have laid strongest emphasis on elegant and even artificially refined expression, the cult of language

being almost the sole content of their original civilization. The Jews, however, have always concentrated on ideas, never clung closely to their national language and paid very little attention to form and in particular to elegance and delicacy of expression. The result was that the Arabs in their almost fanatical devotion to their much-studied tongue, imposed it, almost inadvertently on most of the peoples living between the Atlantic Ocean and the mountains of Iran while Jews readily gave up their own language and frequently exchanged one language for another.

There can be no doubt that the ancient Arabs were endowed with a peculiar talent for oral expression and poetry. There can be no doubt that classical Arabic, with its extremely elaborate grammatical form and its rich vocabulary, is a unique creation. It is therefore only natural that its creators should have clung to it tenaciously, owing to the precarious life of the desert which seeks stability in tradition and fixed forms. It was not religion which caused the Koran to be read everywhere in the Arabic original. The Hebrew Bible was translated by the Jews themselves and and for their own use into Aramaic, Greek, Arabic and many other tongues. It was only the devotion of the Arabs to their language which made it unthinkable for them that their Holy Book should be read in any vernacular except their own.

The Arabs have earned a most abundant reward for their staunch allegiance to their language. On the other hand, it must be admitted that the language cult, the exaggerated emphasis on outward form of expressions, had a detrimental influence on the spiritual development of all the Arabic-speaking peoples. One senses this in their literature and not only in the periods of decadence which set in very early—epigonism being essentially inherent in this

formalistic and tradition—bound world. In proportion to the stupendous amount of material preserved, it strikes one as particularly poor in motifs and literary forms in the higher sense and largely devoid of genuine feeling. All the efforts of the writers in Arabic are concentrated on elegant idioms, bold comparisons, unusual metaphors and the like. Arabic poetry may be compared to an ornament which may take the form of a plant or even of an animal but does so not for the sake of representation but in order to turn it into an ingenious, arbitrary and abstract form. This remoteness of literary creation from real life, together with its rigid traditionalism, was probably one of the causes for the terrible spiritual stagnation from which the Arabs have not recovered to this day.

How different was the Hebrew literary genius! Only a small fraction of ancient Hebrew literature has been preserved but how rich it is in motifs and how close to life! There is no ostentatious display of art; the entire attention is concentrated on genuine feeling and ideas. If we have compared Arabic literature with an ornament we may liken Hebrew creation only to a living man himself!

However, the lack of fixed literary forms had the consequence that biblical literature found practically no imitators even in Israel itself, while the artificial verse-making of the Arabs found a tremendous following even beyond the scope of the Arabic language. The development of Hebrew poetry along Arab lines in the Middle Ages is only one example of this. In literature—as in life—it is often not the higher values but the more impressive forms - which prevail. (pp. 43-45)...

In Western Europe, the surrender of Latin to local languages and the rise of national vernaculars marked the transition from medieval to modern times. The Arab countries are in a similar situation. The difference between the classical literary language and the colloquial—even

that spoken by the most educated persons—is immense with all the negative effects of such a dualism on literature, spiritual development in general and even on morals.

Twenty years ago it seemed that Egypt would actually do something about this grave problem and I venture to to surmise that if at that time Egypt had been a really independent state with some outstanding creations—not only some pleasant collections of short stories—available in the local vernacular, we would have had today a national Egyptian language which would have done away with that linguistic dualism that is so detrimental to the Arab mind. (pp. 133-134).

In other words, Goitein is telling us that the classical Arabic of the Holy Quran cannot answer the needs of modern society and therefore local dialects should be encouraged in its place and adopted officially as the media of literary and journalistic expression throughout the Arab world. Some of the most accomplished Egyptian writers and intellectuals were won over to this view and began to support the cause of the colloquial at the expense of the classical. The Coptic writer, Salama Mussa (1887-1958,) was the chief sponsor of that movement which included the support of men like Muhammad Hussain Haikal, Ahmad Amin and Ahmad Hassan al-Zayyat. If this movement is allowed to succeed, each Arab country will ultimately begin to boast of its own language. Arabic will cease to be an international language and the ties of the Arabs with the Quran and Islamic literature will be broken as a result of which they will be stripped of their entire religious and spiritual heritage. Combined with the

replacement of the Arabic script with the Roman alphabet, Muslims would lose their ability to read the Quran and subsequently the whole of their cultural and literary legacy would become meaningless to them.

Thus behind the impressive display of Goitein's erudition, the Jewish conspiracy is laid bare.

THE SOCIOLOGICAL VIEW

An intelligent Muslim university student in England has aptly commented on contemporary orientalism as follows: "The majority of the Western orientalists who claim to study Islam continue to work within the old colonial or missionary framework. Thus while we have an ever increasing mass of literature about Islam coming out of the academies of Europe and America, the understanding or even tolerance of either Islam or the Muslim viewpoint shows no improvement."* Even a superficial study of Montgomery Watt's basic work, *Islam and the Integration of Society*** will sufficiently bear out the truth of this statement.

The title of this book appears deceptively promising as does its introduction. Since social disintegration is the most outstanding characteristic of contemporary life, Montgomery Watt declares the purpose of his work to discuss from a sociological point of view, specifically how Islamic civilization achieved this cultural integration so successfully. Had he honestly elaborated on this theme

* "A Growing Interest in the Teaching of Islam," Abdul Wahid, *The Muslim*, London, May 1972, p. 77.

** Paul Routledge & Kegan, London, 1961.

with all its ramifications, his book could have performed an exceptionally valuable service to the intellectual leadership in Europe and America, pointing out what guidance they could derive from Islamic history on how to achieve the social, moral and cultural integration of the modern world. Unfortunately, this laudable objective has been utterly ruined from the beginning by the author's prejudices and preconceived notions.

The lengthy first chapters commit the fatal error of attributing the historical rise of Islam and the growing power of the Holy Prophet in Medina after the *Hijra* primarily to economic factors. This method of approach is so thoroughly materialistic, it comes dangerously close to Marxism and is most demoralizing for the reader, especially the Muslim reader, because all the transcendental value of Islam is denied and the tremendous spiritual power and attraction it exerted is belittled.

The entire work aims to impress upon the reader that Islam is purely man-made, an historical product of its time and place and no more.

> It is clear that Muhammad deliberately moulded the new religion to make it more Arabian. For a time after he went to Medina, he hoped that the Jews there would accept him as a prophet and emphasized the common features of his teachings and theirs. At the end of some months, however, he realized that there was no chance of gaining Jewish recognition and (not unlike Paul turning to the Gentiles) began to introduce distinctively Arab elements, apparently in accordance with the desires of at least some of the Medinian Muslims. Previously he had told his followers to face Jerusalem when they performed the worship. Now according to the traditional story, while he was conducting the worship in the prayer place of one of the Medinian clans, he received a revelation to face Mecca instead and he and all the congregation turned round and completed the worship facing Mecca. Ever since then, Mecca has been for Muslims all over the world, the *qiblah* or direction to be faced in worship. In this way, was dramatized the break with the Jews. There had already been Arab elements in Islam—the revelation had been an Arabic Quran, that is, a religious lecture for Arabic-speakers and the Ka'abah had been acknowledged as a house of God. Now Mecca and the Ka'abah were linked up with Abraham and at the first opportunity, Muhammad himself attempted to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca and the circumambulation of the Ka'abah, thereby Islamizing several old Arabian rites. (p. 93).

In discussing the integration of political life, Montgomery Watt interprets *Jihad*, as he does every other Islamic institution, in purely materialistic terms.

> By the time the Islamic state had become an empire, however, it is doubtful whether the idea of the Holy war was more advantageous than disadvantageous. While it may be possible for a desert tribe to regard all its neighbours as enemies, it is not easy for a large and complex state to behave this way. In Muhammad's closing years, it had been obligatory for every able-bodied Muslim to take part in the campaigns unless excused. Most Muslims seemed to have been content to remain liable for military service throughout their lives. They had the privilege of living as part of a ruling aristocracy. When the expansion slowed down, however, and the fighting became harder and the

booty less plentiful, many were unwilling to leave the camp sites for arduous expeditions to distant frontiers......Eventually Muslim leaders are found employing mercenaries who might not even be Muslims. Thus the idea of the holy war ceased to have much real importance......*Jihad* is perhaps the weakest part of the conception of the Islamic community as it has been developed out of the old Arab idea of the tribe. (pp. 158-160).

Even the pure unadulterated monotheism of Islam is denied by this orientalist who seeks to impress upon his readers that it was thoroughly corrupted from the outset by polytheistic elements.

> There was some difficulty to begin with over the pagan shrines other than the Ka'abah. The story of the "satanic" inspiration is the evidence for this. Muhammad, it is reported, once received what he thought to be a genuine revelation which ran as follows :
>
> Have ye considered al-Lat and ul-Uzza,
> And Manat, the third, the other?
> These are the gods to be exalted,
> Whose intercession is hoped for.
>
> This delighted the pagan Meccans for they took it as an acknowledgement of the worship of their pagan shrines ......Later, however, (though it is not certain how much later), Muhammad realized that the third and fourth verses were not a genuine revelation but had been suggested to him by Satan and that the true continuation of the first two was :
>
> Have ye the male issue and He the female ?
> In that case, it is a division unfair.
> They are nothing but names which ye and your
> fathers have given......
>
> This naturally annoyed the pagans who had been

> delighted by the previous version. The point to note is that Muhammad did not at first see any incompatibility. Presumably he thought that these three dieties, each of which had an important shrine in the Meccan region, were something like angels. The whole incident is interesting and important, however, and shows that the Muslims decided and only gradually which animistic practices were compatible with monotheism and which were not. One aspect of the Arab outlook made it easy for Islam to incorporate practices which had originally been aministic. A practice could be regarded as commanded by God and human beings did not seek reasons for God's commands. Thus the sanctuary at Mecca was sacred because God had so decreed; the circumambulation of the Ka'abah was obligatory for Muslims because God had so decreed and so on with many other rituals which came to form part of the Pilgrimage. When one looks at the details of what later became established Muslim usage, one finds vestiges of animism omnipresent. (pp. 188—189).

It is important for the scholar to note that the authority the author derives these queer notions is listed in fine print in the footnote ; none else than his own work, *Muhammad at Mecca* (pp. 101-110). Of course, it does not bother him in the least that this legend and its interpretation has never been accepted by any legitimate Muslim authority but is rather a concoction by generations of orientalists.

Like his predecessors in orientalism, Montgomery Watt is determined to prove at all costs that the *Shariah* is a purely man-made legal institution, thereby depriving it of all transcendental religious value.

The infliction of the punishment of stoning for adultery (if what is becoming standard Western interpretation of the confused material is accepted), shows how a non-Arab custom could be Islamized. The Quranic punishment for adultery is flogging ; but some of the jurists also recognized stoning as a punishment in the case of married persons. The normal punishment for adultery at Medina in Muhammad's time lifetime was flogging though to begin with and in certain cases, it may have been house imprisonment. When many persons from the Judaeo-Christian tradition became Muslims, they tended to retain the punishment of stoning to which they had been accustomed. Eventually, stories began to be circulated showing that stoning had been sanctioned and practiced by Muhammad and some of the leading Companions. (p. 192).

Montgomery Watt accepts the mischievous interpretations of Ignaz Goldziher and Joseph Schacht on the development of the *Shariah* as if they were the final authorities on the subject whose verdict could never be questioned.

There have been great advances in the understanding of the development of the *Shariah* by Western scholars during the last century. A notable step forward in the critque of Islamic tradition was made by Ignaz Goldziher towards the end of the 19th century and another step more specifically connected with the *Shariah* has recently been made by Joseph Schacht in his *Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*, (Oxford, 1950). As a result of the work of these and many other scholars, the modern Western view of the development of the *Shariah* differs considerably from the orthodox Muslim view. (p. 199).

According to the theories of these orientalists, the early companions of the Prophet did not feel obliged to base the *Shariah* on the

Sunnah of the Holy Prophet but rather to them the "*Sunnah*" meant simply the ancestral pagan tribal customs. It was not until Imam Shafi that the concept of the *Shariah* being based firmly and exclusively on the Traditions of the Holy Prophet was generally accepted. They allege that (God forbid) Imam Shafi and the other great jurists did not hestiate to forge spurious Hadith to this effect :

It is hardly too much to say that all the wisdom of the Middle East became incorporated into the traditions—ancient Arab wisdom, sentences from the Old and New Testaments, Neoplatonic and Gnostic doctrines and maxims from Persia and India......Much of this material was clearly inconsistent with Islam and must have worried the leaders of the main body of moderate Muslims but those who believed in one or the other part of it saw that by passing it off as coming from Muhammad, they justified their own belief in it......It is likely that the practice of forging Hadith was begun by the moderates and continued by the eccentrics. Then the moderates borrowed it from the eccentrics. It is difficult for modern westerners to realize how hard it was for the nascent Islamic culture working with different categories based on oral materials dealt with a situation like that. In an oral culture, once a story has been passed around, it is remembered if it is a good one whether it is true or not and attempts to deny it are regarded as due to ulterior motives. (p. 225).

And in the fine print of the footnote, the author's authority for this blasphemy is again none else than Goldziher's *Muhammedanische Studien.*

"In fact, what the modern critics of Hadith do not realize in applying their so-called "historical method" is that they are projecting the kind of

agnostic mentality prevalent in so many academic circles today on to the mentality of a traditional Muslim scholar of Hadith. They think that for him also, the questions of religion could be treated in such a "detached" manner as to enable them to even "forge" sayings of the Prophet or to accept them into the traditional corpus without the greatest care. They do not realize that for men of the early centuries of the *Hijra* and especially these religious scholars, the fire of Hell was not an abstract thought but a concrete reality. They feared Allah in a way which most modern men can hardly imagine and it is psychologically unsound that with a mentality to which the alternative of Heaven or Hell is the most real thing of all, they should commit the unpardonable sin of forging prophetic sayings. Nothing is less scientific than to project the modern mentality, which is an anomaly in history, on to a period in which the verities of religion determined life itself and in which men sought first and foremost to perform the most important duty placed upon their shoulders, namely, to save their souls. The *Sunnah* of the Prophet and his sayings left such a profound imprint upon the first generation and those who came immediately afterwards that a forging of new sayings and therefore innovations in religious questions that already possessed precedence would have been immediately opposed by the community. It would have meant a break in the continuity of the whole religious life and pattern of Islam which is in fact,

not discernible - proof of the falsity of the arguments presented against the authenticity of Hadith literature, arguments which attack not only the dubious and spurious sayings but the main body of Hadith according to which Islamic society has lived and modelled itself since its inception."*

Tragically, such simple but irrefutable facts are not accepted by the orientalists except in the rare, exceptional more enlightened and objective Western scholars like the late Arthur Arberry. Here is Montgomery Watt's final verdict on the *Shariah* :

> So far, an attempt has been made to indicate some positive functions of the *Shariah* as an instrument for Islamic social integration but now it must also be asked whether it has any negative functions and whether it contributes in any way to the disintegration of Islamic society. . . . . This peculiar nature of the *Shariah* as the mark of charisma creates difficulties at the present time when Islamic states try to frame modern constitutions on the basis of the Shariah. Since the *Shariah* was hardly a practical code even for a medieval state, it is extremely difficult to adapt it to the needs of today. (pp. 207-208).

Proof of the author's Christian missionary inclinations is his interpretation of the Quran :

> An interesting example of the strength of the dogma of "corruption" is contained in the interpretations of the story of Abraham's sacrifice of his son. The event is mentioned in the Quran (XXXVII: 102-110) but the son's name is not given. There is no reason for supposing that to begin with, anyone would suppose that the son was not Isaac.

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* *Ideals and Realities of Islam*, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1966, pp. 81-82.

In the course of time, the question became intertwined with the rivalry between the Arabs and the Persians. Isaac came to be regarded as the ancestor of the Persians as well as the Jews . . . . . Many of the early authorities quoted by al-Tabari knew that in the Old Testament, Isaac was taken for the sacrifice and al-Tabari, himself of Persian origin, prefers this view. The pro-Arab party replied that this was a place where the scriptures had been corrupted. In the end, the pro-Arab party won and it is now universally held by Muslims that the son Abraham was about to sacrifice was Ismail. In this way, a view which honoured the Arabs and which supported and was supported by the dogma of "corruption" overcame the natural interpretation of the Quran in accordance with the Old Testament. It is not too much to say that the belief that the Bible was corrupt had so come to dominate the minds of Muslims that they no longer cared whether their interpretions of the Quran were in accordanco with the Bible or not. (pp. 264-265).

And once agains, the supreme "authority" in the fine print of the footnotes for this mischief is none else than Goldziher.

In denying all transcendental value to the spiritual message of Islam, like most other orientalists, Montgomery Watt limits the validity of this faith to a restricted time and place.

There was great audacity in the claim of a citizen of obscure Mecca that he was founding a religion parallel to Judaism and Christianity. How could a man who had only 300 followers at the battle of Badr in A.D. 624 put himself on the same level with Jesus whose followers then numbered in the millions of the Roman empire and the millions outside of it in both east and west? This would seem to be an undue exaggeration of his importance.

Nevertheless a case can be made out for holding that this conception of parallelism was not ideological. There was a need to be met and Islam met this need. It was fundamentally a religious need but politics was involved. It had been noted that the Arabs were suspicious of both Judaism and Christianity because of their political implications. Muhammad, it has been said, was the answer of the East to the challenge of Alexander whose conquest flooded the Middle East with a wave of Greek influence. The struggle between Greek and oriental influences had been transferred to the religious plane. Christianity, an oriental religion, had invaded Europe but there it had become amalgamated with the Greek outlook. In other words, while Christianity expressed the Old Testament tradition in a form which suited the spiritual needs and intellectual categories of most classes of the citizens of the Roman empire, nothing similar was done to provide an expression of the Judaeo-Christian tradition for the inhabidants of the Middle East. Islam was able to meet a need which Christianity had not met, the need of certain of the non-Greek-speaking peoples of the Middle East for an expression of the Abrahamic tradition in their own intellectual categories. Muhammad was not in a position to foresee all this future development of his teaching but it could be seen in his time that the Arabs were in need of an expression of the Abrahamic tradition in their own intellectual categories and without political implications. (pp. 268-269).

The moral relativity of such orientalists as Montgomery Watt insists that there is not one Islam but many. He cannot understand why the Muslims have not nationalized their religion (as Protestants did in Europe after the Reformation) so that each part of the world has an "Islam" of its own ;

> In West Africa, there has been little integration in the intellectual sphere. There has been Muslim scholarship in West Africa, sometimes of high standard in restricted fields but the deep need for conformity has ruled out any attempt by competent scholars to rethink Islam in the light of the West African situation. There can be no attempt to adapt the *Shariah* to West African needs and to express its essential values in a form suited to West African ideals of conduct. Similarly there can be no attempt to re-state Islamic doctrine in terms of West African categories of thought. In the present phase of development, such things would make orthodox scholars feel that they had ceased to be genuine Muslims. (p. 138).

One can plainly see here how the Orientalists are working for the nationalization and secularization of Islam so that the unity of the *Ummah* may be destroyed forever.

Montgomery Watt flatly denies the possibility that Islam in its present form can have any appeal for the Western world.

> Although Islam has produced a form of the Abrahamic tradition more suited to the individual categories of at least some oriental peoples than Christianity, it is a long step from that to allowing that Islam has produced a form of the Abrahamic tradition in any way suited to the intellectual categories of the peoples who constitute the great body of Christendom—Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant.—the Greek and Latin speakers and their descendants. The attitude of Islam towards the Bible and towards the history of Christendom has made it almost wholly unaware of the problems involved in presenting Islam to Europeans. There is little sign in Islam of any move towards the integration of rival traditions comparable to the agreement between Greeks and Latins to regard their formulations of the doctrine of the Trinity as equivalent. (p. 275).

Thus it is not surprising why the author considers the possibility of a universal triumph of the Islamic order as detrimental for the welfare of humanity.

> Suppose that as a result of another world war in which all other religions were seriously weakened, Islam became the dominant religion throughout the world and that its rivals gradually faded away ; could this be regarded as a satisfactory integration of world society ? The answer would seem to be that this could not be satisfactory for two reasons. One is that such a world-religion] would presumably not have fully accepted and acknowledged its dependence on Christian and Jewish traditions in its origins and in its formative period and such a failure to accept one's past is as unhealthy for a society as for an individual. The other reason is that under the supposed circumstances, those who came into Islam from traditions whose intellectual categories were rather different from the intellectual categories of the Islamic tradition would presumably have to accept without question the formulations in terms of the intellectual categories of the existing Islamic tradition. This would be a collossal loss to world society of an element of variety and richness. In the course of time, this loss might in some measure be made good by a movement of diversification within Islam but that could not be reckoned on. (pp. 275-276).

The fact that technological Western civilization is rapidly destroying all others throughout the world at variance with it, is rigidly intolerant to any ideals and values conflicting with its own, and imposing everywhere an unprecedented drab and dull uniformity in dress, in architecture, and in almost everything else, is evidently not considered by Montgomery Watt as any "loss" at all but

instead he frightens his readers with the purely hypothetical "menace" of Islam !

For Islam to be acceptable (particularly to the Western world) as a universal faith equally suitable for all peoples in the contemporary age, Montgomery Watt dictates to Muslims the following prescription.

> The obstacles seem almost insuperable. All the distorted ideological conceptions which have been noted would require to be corrected. *ISLAM WOULD HAVE TO ADMIT THE FACTS OF ITS ORIGIN*—the historical influence of the Judaeo-Christian religious traditions and the cultural traditions of Syria, Iraq and Egypt. This would lead to a revised conception of the relative importance of religious and cultural factors in the growth of Islamic civilization. It would have to be prepared to learn, even in the religious sphere, from Christians and Jews and that would be very hard. It would have to look again at the centuries in which it thought of itself as the community in whose life the history of mankind was consummated and realize that whatever the future may bring, its rule during some of those centuries was much humbler. It would have to distinguish more radically than has hitherto been done, between the essential principles of its divinely-given code of conduct and the temporary applications and work out fresh applications to novel circumstances. (p. 283).

In other words, he is telling Muslims that they must deny the very foundations of their faith if they are to preserve it ! Islam cannot "admit the facts of its origin" as Montgomery Watt understands this, without destroying its entire vital essence as Divine revelation. Such "Islam" could not continue to be Islam and Muslims would be Muslim no longer but this is precisely the objective of the orientalist conspiracy.

THE SECULAR VIEW

The theme of this book* is the author's analysis of the reaction of Muslim intellectuals in the Arab world, Turkey, Pakistan and India to the challenge of twentieth-century civilization.

> This work is intended both for the non-Muslim and for Muslim readers. For comparative religious studies in our day, we would suggest have a function to fulfill in intercommunication. In addition to their academic statements, they may adopt as a new criterion the capacity to construct religious statements that will be intelligible and cogent in at least two different traditions simultaneously. The work will fail if it does not enable non-Muslims to understand better the behaviour of Muslims that they observe, books by Muslim authors that they read and Muslims whom they meet. It will fail also if intelligent and honest Muslims are not able to recognize its observations as accurate, its interpretations and analysis as meaningful and enlightening. For both groups it will fail if it does not serve in some small way to further mutual comprehensibity. In such a study, these are the tests of validity. (p. vi).

At the outset, this work would appear to possess more solid substance than the superficial, almost frivolous books of a similar nature. The author can boast of some knowledge of Arabic as well as

* *Islam in Modern History*. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1957.

an acquaintance with his source material. Before embarking on his main topic, he does attempt a more or less objective analysis of Islamic doctrine and principles especially as they relate to historical interpretation in contrast to the Christian world-view.

Though now somewhat out-of-date since the Socialist regimes have captured power, his chapter on the Arab world is the most profound and enlightening in the entire book. By illustrating his arguments with quotations from the works of contemporary Arab intellectuals (mainly in Egypt), he brings to the full light of day the inferiority-complex, the mediocrity, the logical inconsistences and above all, the spiritual, moral and intellectual poverty inherent in this polemical, apologetic approach. In order to contrast the mentality of the traditionalist versus the modernist, he quotes lengthy extracts from the *Majallat ul Azhar* both under the editorialship of Al-Khidr Husain (1930-1933) and his successor Farid Wajidi (1934-1952). He rightly praises the noble idealism, high scholastic standards and spiritual quality of al Khidr Hussain in striking comparison with the intellectual dishonesty and spiritual poverty of Farid Wajdi's writings. Dr. Wilfred Cantwell Smith's criticism of Farid Wajdi's apologetics as representative of so much writing of this kind is as devastating as it is true and deserves the most serious consideration. "So keen is Wajdi to satisfy doubters by using Western

criteria that paradoxically, a marked irreligiousness permeates almost all of his defence (p. 144)......and God appears remarkedly seldom throughout these pages. (p. 146).

This brilliant analysis utterly falters when he deals with *al Ikhwan al Muslimun.* Its role and positive achievements have been grossly under-estimated. Even worse, is the deliberate misrepresentation of its entire essence :

> Unfortunately, for some of the members of the *Ikhwan* and even more for many of their sympathizers and fellow-travellers, the reaffirmation of Islam is not a constructive programme based on cogent plans and known objectives or even felt ideals but rather an outlet for emotion. It is the expression of the hatred, the frustration, vanity and destructive fury of a people who for long have been the prey of poverty, impotence and fear. All the discontent of men who find the modern world too much for them can, in movements such as the *Ikhwan*, find action and satisfaction. It is the Muslim Arab's aggressive reaction to the attack of his world which he has already found to be almost overwhelming, then has leapt with frantic sadistic joy to burn and kill. The burning of Cairo, the assassination of Prime Ministers, the intimidating of Christians, the vehemence and hatred in their literature — all of this is to be understood in terms of a people who have lost their way, whose heritage has proven unequal to modernity, whose leaders have been dishonest, whose ideals have failed. In this aspect, the new Islamic upsurge is a force not to solve problems but to intoxicate those who can no longer abide the failure to solve them. (pp. 158-159).

There is little truth in these accusations.

The *Ikhwan* were no illiterate rabble rousers but included in their ranks, the most gifted, intelligent, educated, well-informed and responsible youth from the modern colleges and universities. As doctors, lawyers, scientists, engineers, businessmen and teachers, many held high and influential positions representing the cream of society of Egypt and adjacent lands. How could the irresponsible statements quoted above have any relation to such outstanding *Ikhwan* scholars as Sayyid Qutb Shahid, Abdul Qadir Oudah Shahid, Dr. Said Ramadan, Dr. Mustafa al-Sabai and the late Shaikh Abdul Aziz al-Badri of Iraq ? Far from initiating, much less perpetuating violence themselves, all of them have been the victims of the most inhuman atrocities and injustice perpetuated by the very disciples of secularism the author so loudly applauds. Not only does Dr. Wilfred Cantwell Smith have not a word of condemnation against this travesty of the rule of law but he defends the ruthless supression of *al Ikhwan* by the Nasser regime as an imperative.

What is the root-cause of the malady of the Arab world today ? As reply to that question, Dr. Wilfred Cantwell Smith quotes an article "The Riddle of Arab Unrest" which appeared in the April 29, 1954 issue of the Boston daily, *The Christian Science Monitor* :

> While it takes no great insight to recognize that the Middle East today is an area where the former way of life is falling apart without a satisfactory substitute

> having yet made its appearance, it is more difficult to draw positive conclusions as to the cause of this deterioration. Perhaps all that can be said in a limited space is that it has become abundantly apparent that the intellectual foundations of Arab life have been found almost wholly wanting in this period of grave crisis. Faced with the necessity of quickly and decisively evolving a new social, economic and political pattern, the educated classes in the Middle East have so far shown themselves almost totally inadequate to the task. Accustomed to believe that their way of life was inherently superior to that of any other religious or racial group, they have been unable to grasp the fact that this way of life has failed them. Refusing to acknowledge where they themselves have failed, they have fallen in to the pitfall of blaming others, in this case, the West. (p. 151).

In the two and a half decades since these lines were written, the rulers of the Arab world have opted for all-out westernization and secularization, ruthlessly eliminating the last remnants of Islamic culture from the public life of their respective realms, yet corruption, decadence and weakness plague them now more than ever. Despite the frantic modernization of the educational systems and mass-media, the Arab world under Socialism has not achieved national strength or real independence. The disastrous defeat suffered at the hands of Israel in June 1967 should have been sufficient eye-opener to the failure of nationalism and secularsm. Dr. Wilfred Cantwell Smith would attribute that failure to a lack of a solid, historical tradition of agnostic humanism. That the Arabs

have failed to produce a Thomas Paine or a Voltaire, he regards as their major shortcoming.

The only Muslim people for which the author expresses any geniune sympathy are the Kemalists in Turkey.

> The reference is not to the Turkish masses, particularly the peasants of Anatolia. These many be conservative, even tautly so; and may be but slightly or hardly affected by the new un-Islamic outlook that the lay government has in this view been seeking to impose. It is a question rather of the ruling class-Ataturk and his modernizing entourage—men who in the Kemalist Revolution threw over the old Turkey and all its ways and are seen as deliberately and powerfully setting out to build a new secular (irreligiouse or antireligious) state—the intelligentsia, the bourgeoise elite, the men who made the Revolution and have been carrying through its ideals and practical implications and have enjoyed its fruits. It is with this group that our own study is concerned (p. 173).

> This much can be hardly gain said; that the Kemalists are the only Muslim people in the modern world who know what they want. Theirs is the only Muslim nation that has evolved intellectual and social foundations that in the main they can and do regard as substantially adequate to modernity. We have argued that Islam as a religion takes history very seriously. The Kemalist segment of Islamic history is the only one in the contemporary period that those involved in it can look upon without mis-giving. The Kemalists are the only Muslims who can regard their participation in modern Islamic history as reasonably effective. (p. 163).

Here Dr. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, who repeatedly accuses contemporary Muslim leaders of

romanticism, sentimentality and unrealism, is himself indulging in pure wishful thinking. The hard fact is that the Westernizers have enjoyed little more success in Turkey than other Muslim lands. Nowhere have their desecrations found acceptance among the people. Not only the simple common people of the villages but even many of the modern-educated youth in the cities, are sick and tired of these novelties. However unpalatable to the orientalists, the hard fact is that the Kemalist reforms never enjoyed popular support and could only be imposed by force and the ruthless suppression of all opposition. So great was that resistance that during his dictatorship. Ataturk was compelled to declare Martial Law nine times. It is indeed a paradox that the so-called "liberals" and "progressives" in the Muslim world exhibit the least respect for democratic ideals and are the staunch upholders of rigid athoritarianism with all the media of information and communication under strict state control and organized opposition banned. Thus it is the "progressives" — not the orthodox — who are most guilty of dogmatism, narrow-mindedness and intolerance. Since the American ideals of political liberty and the rule of law are strictly reserved for domestic consumption, the orientalists are always ready to condone the use of despotism by the modernists so long as that suits their purpose.

> Certainly the Kemalists have not renounced Islam. Not at all. They simply took the necessary, salutary reform-

ing step to making religion what it should be-an individual, personal matter, a thing of conscience, a matter of private faith. Certainly they have not renounced Islam. They simply freed it. More profound, more sensitive are doubtless those Turkish modernizers who concede the original legitimacy of the old religious forms and expressions for their own time but see the new Islam of the Kemalists as in quest of new forms and expressions relevant to the novel modern world. For such, it is not a question of calling the old forms, formalities, distortions, non-essentials, but simply old. They expressed for previous generations, perhaps most felicitously and adequately the truth of Islam but modern man has evolved into a situation where these are no longer either feliticitous or adequate, where they no longer express that truth. They are therefore discarded even by those who warmly are convinced that the truth is there and is important. But in this case, the task of the modernizer is much more delicate and responsible; for it is creative. It is not simply a matter of going back to an erstwhile purity in religious history but rather of going on to discover or to hammer out new values that the heritage has enshrined. (p. 177).

People in Western Christendom and in Turkey and incipiently now throughout, the world are determining their own and their nations future for good or ill. They may be bungling ; that is, creating badness. But that is vitally different from not being creative at all. While one may wish to distinguish between men who exercise such creatvity and those who do not, who do not know it and do not accept it, it would seem inept to call religious or Muslim only the uncreative p. 181).

Now let us examine a few samples of what Dr. Wilfred Cantwell Smith means by this "creativity."

To quote one of these Kemalists with whom the author conversed in the summer of 1948:

"There are three Islams : the religion of the Quran, the religion of the *ulema* and the religion of the masses. This last is superstition, obscurantism, fetishism. The second is bogged down with the whole weight of out-of-date legalism — impossible stuff making it necessary to get a *Fatwa* before one can have one's teeth filled by a dentist. Turkey has got rid of the second. It was time to abolish it. We have thus led the way of the Muslim world. Islam needs a reformation. To this extent Turkey is in the forefront of the Islamic world." (pp. 176-177).

What does this reformation involve ?

More controversially, this spirit can be detected in suggestions or assumptions that the institutions of Islam can and should be replaced with new ones more in tune with contemporary conditions. Already during the 1920's radical changes in the rites and observances of Islam including its prayer ritual and mosque services were being officially discussed. The Kemalists are prepared to consider such proposals seriously. Islam was progressive for its time but times and conditions have meanwhile changed. The logic through which orthodoxy was earlier expressed has ceased to be an accepted mode of thought and ceased to be an effective instrument of communication. Therefore, they feel if Islam or any other religion is to make itself understood, let alone acceptable to educated men, its propositions will have to be formulated in quite a new way. (p. 178).

These suggestions included among other things, the banning of Arabic, the ritual of *wudhu* and *Salat* as well as the introduction into the mosque of pews and a mixed choir singing Western-style hymns to

the accompiament of an organ.* Dr. Smith insists that the intention of these reforms does not involve the question of adopting Christianity but rather of being modern instead of medieval. (p. 204).

> Striking, certainly among the ruling circles in Turkey, is the earnest conviction, the almost grim determination, that the recent freedom for religious expression shall not and will not lead to a return to the Law. (p. 19). The Law has served as a carefully constructed and beautifully structured bridge between this world and the next ; many generations of Muslims have with sureness found their way across it. But today when the stream of life is ever-quickening its tempo, that bridge in the eyes of the Kemalists has proven to be a mirage and under the impact of the new, with torrential swiftness, is seen to be breaking from its moorings —on both sides. The bridge is receding from them; not only has it been wrenched loose from the solid ground of everyday things that make up mundane life on this shore but also it no longer seems in contact with the Divine on the other side. (p. 198).

Nationalist sectarianism, along with secularism, is an integral part of the Kemalist credo :

> On few subjects are the Kemalists so emphatic as in asserting that pan-Islam is dead. The depth of Turkish isolationist feeling is an important fact in the modern Islamic world. Embodied in Kemalism with its renunciation of the Ottoman empire, their whole venture is essentially a self-renewal For the Kemalists to reform other people's Islam would seem to them as absurd as it would seem to them not to reform their own. As one Kemalist put it : "We want to construct a Turkish Islam which will be ours relevant to and integrated with

* These "reforms" completely failed and were never carried through.

> our new society just as Anglicanism is Christianity in a thoroughly English fashion. Anglicanism is not Italian or Russian. Yet no one accuses it of not being Christian. Why should we not have an Islam of our own ?" This is new in Islamic history and to outside Muslims shocking. Europeans who know from sad experience the devastating potentialities of conflicting nationalisms as well as Muslims who know from proud tradition the integrating potentialities of Islamic universalism may be sorry to see the cosmopolitanism of Islamic civilization broken up. The Kemalists, however, are not sorry. Their separatism is deliberate and is welcomed with enthusiasm* Moreover, they view the international society in which Turkey will and should participate as something other or larger than the community of Islamic nations. The Kemalists are Islamically isolationist. What is more, in rejecting the Law, they are rejecting the very notion of Islamic social integration. (pp. 193-194).

By no stretch of the imagination can it be claimed that these novelties have served any creative or constructive purpose. Their sole impact has been to facilitate national disintegration and mutual dissention between the respective contending parties —namely, the rulers and the ruled. As a result of this "isolationism", it is a crime under Turkish law to express public solidarity with Muslims in other countries.**

* In recent years Turks have been increasingly vocal in their sympathies for their Muslim brethren in other countries. 'Muslim Turks are now trying to restore their historical links with the Arabs.

* The latest Kemalist military *coup d'etat* in October 1980 came immediately after the Islamic movement in Turkey expressed solidarity for the Palestinians and a large rally in Konya where demonstrators wearing turbans waved slogans in Arabic script calling for an end to secularism, the restoration of *Shariah* and revival of the *Khilafat.*

> Of any group that sets out to "reform" Islam or indeed any religion, it may well be asked, by what authority do they propose to do so? The Kemalist proceeds on the authority of Ataturk's Revolution. This is the great dominating event of his society and his life which he sees as having given a new birth to his nation, transforming it from decadence and disrepute into strength, honour, and in an ultimate though far from static sense—virtue. To say that is to him religiously good and relevant. (p. 190).

In the four decades since his death, the Turkish people have discovered the real Mustafa Kemal Ataturk as quite different from the glorified image that official propaganda machinery sought to impose upon them. Besides the reign of terror he unleashed against his political rivals, the sordid details of his domestic life, which included alcoholism, fornication and adultery, among other vices, have become well-known to every Turk. Impartial Turkish historians have established the fact that Mustafa Kemal was a dedicated member of the Freemason lodge of Salonika, the Commander who during the first World War betrayed his fellow officers by making a secret treaty with General Allenby, a pawn in British imperialist and Freemason schemes and the vacillatating negotiator at the Lusanne conference. Consequently, with the exception of a few atheists in Istanbul and Ankara, the majority of Turks no longer esteem Ataturk as a national hero.

> Few deny that the Turks have been dramatically successful in re-making themselves into a dynamic nation able to stand on its own feet in the modern world.* (p. 172).

* The Kemalist regime is Turkey in facing great unrest and political instability.

> These Turks have actually shared in what is perhaps the most fundamental experience of modern Western civilization: the experience of remaking one's environment. Modern Turks, like modern occidentals, have through brilliant hard work and well-applied intelligence, come to feel themselves the directors of their destiny. (p. 180).

Repeatedly the author stresses the "creative" nature of Kemalism and repudiates as unworthy of serious consideration the accusation that the disciples of Ataturk have been only superficial imitators. The superficial, almost trivial nature of Kemalism can be proved by the utter failure of the Turkish modernists to master the disciplines of Western learning. Had Kemalism been as genuinely creative as orientalists allege, then these reforms should have resulted in a cultural renaissance and Turks should have made great contributions to humanity in the arts and sciences. Unfortunately, these dreams never materialized and despite being dominated for fifty-five years by a regime which regards the westernization of the country as its raison d'etre, Turkey has remained as culturally and intellectually sterile as any other Muslim land. Despite more than a half century of the imposition of the Latin alphabet, more than fifty percent the adult population is illiterate. The economic position of Turkey under Ataturk was worse than under Sultan Abdul Hamid. Militarily Turkey is totally dependent upon foreign powers. Despite very favourable endowment in territory and natural resources, Turkey has made under Kemalism no notable strides

in industry or commerce. All the slogans of "economic development" and "technical assistance" cannot hide the fact that Turkey is a fifth-rate power, unable to achieve national strength and real independence.

His chapter on Pakistan is a curious mixture of truth and fallacy.

He rightly asserts that the ambiguousness of the Muslim Leaguers who themselves lacking knowledge of Islam, raised the slogans of "Islamic ideology" and "Islamic state" without any clear ideas what these actually meant, as largely responsible for the mental confusion which characterizes Pakistan today. Had the founders and their immediate followers been absolutely sincere and faithful in their intentions and really meant serious business, putting forth the required effort and self-sacrifice to establish a full-blooded Islamic state effective in the modern world, the fate of the country and indeed all Muslim lands would be vastly different from the plight in which we now find ourselves. Unfortunately, the Muslim Leaguers, were so thoroughly steeped in the English educational training they had received that they could only think in terms of communalism or "Muslim nationalism" and imagined the Muslims in India as a secular national group like Englishmen, Frenchmen or Germans.

Proof of the fact that from its inception, Pakistan was envisioned by the Muslim Leaguers as

a state for Muslims but not an Islamic state was demonstrated as soon as the ulema agitated for the implementation of the *Shar'iah*, this activity was immediately supressed as "subversive" and those responsible jailed. Another proof of the lack of sincerity of Pakistani leaders is that despite all the slogans of "Islamic ideology" over the last three decades, the political, economic and educational system has remained exactly as it was in undivided India under the British. Still another proof of this insincerity is that Western innovations have been as enthusiastically encourged by officialdom in this Islamic republic as the "laic" regime in Turkey with this difference—at least the Kemalists were single-minded, straight—forward and honest in the pursuit of their goals while the Pakistani modernizers feel constrained to deceive the people by pasting an "Islamic" label on the most un-Islamic acts. Pakistani modernizers have failed to achieve even the limited success of their Turkish counterparts because they are pulled in several directions at once. Men afflicted with double-mindedness can never hope for positive achievement of any kind.

What is the solution to the dilemma ? The panacea Dr. Wilfred Cantwell Smith proposes is secularism. The level of his scholarship is such that he bases all his arguments for the failure of the Islamic order in Pakistan upon none else than the infamous Munir Report (1953) as if the

autheticity of that document was infallible !*

The author's scholarship descends to its worst in his chapter on the position of the Muslims in contemporary India. He places the entire blame for the suffering of the Indian Muslims upon Pakistan.

> So long as the Indian Muslims think of themselves and by their behaviour and attitudes allow both Pakistani Muslims and Indian Hindus to think of them not as Indian Muslims but as Pakistani expatriates, so long will their pasition be bleak. The rest of India cannot accept them so long as they appear to be fifth columnists. The Indian Muslims are or appear to be in the uneviable position of having their fate depend upon two outside groups. Their condition seems determined not only by the behaviour of their fellow citizens of a different faith but also by that of their fellow Muslims of a different nation. They have been manuvered into a position where it is they who pay for the mistakes or excesses of another Muslim community. Killing of non-Muslims in Lahore wounds Muslims in India; any failure of justice in Dacca makes justice for them much more difficult. The more "Islamic" Pakistan is in form and especially in so far as there is form without substance, the less secure are the Muslims of India. In a crude sense, a cynic might even claim that the more Islam flourishes in Pakistan, the more it will wilt in India.
>
> (pp, 273-74)

According to Dr. Wilfred Cantwell Smith the solution to the plight of the Indian Muslims is secularism and a wholehearted national integration where the rising generation will be educated to consider themselves as Indians first and foremost and Mus-

* See *An Analysis of the Munir Report,* translated and edited by Khurshid Ahmad, Jama'at-e-Islami Publications, Karachi, 1956.

only incidentally.* For special praise he singles out staunch Congressites as Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Humayun Kabir, Sayid Abdul Latif, and Zakir Hussain, the late Indian President, in addition to the nationalist Jamiyat ul Ulema.

> The question of political power and social organization, so central to Islam, has in the past always been considered in yes or no terms. Muslims have either had political power or they have not. Never before have they shared it with others. Close to the heart of Islam has been the conviction that its purpose includes the structuring of a social community, the organization of the Muslim group into a closed body obedient to the law. It is this conception that seems finally be to proving itself inept in India. The Muslims in India, in fact, face what is a radically new and profound problem ; namely, how to live with others as equals. Yet it is a question on which the past expression of Islam offers no immediate guidance. Imperative is the willingness to admit that there are problems waiting to be solved. This awareness has been rare in recent Islam which has tended to believe that problems have been solved already. That the answers have somehow, somewhere been given and do not have to be worked out afresh with creative intelligence—this idea has deeply gripped, almost imprisoned the minds and souls of many Muslims. The Quran has been regarded as presenting a perfected pattern to be applied rather than as an imperative to seek perfection. Islamic law and Islamic history have been felt to be a storehouse of solutions to today's difficulties to be ransacked for binding precedent rather than a record of brave

* The younger generation of Indian Muslims is rapidly becoming assimilated and losing their Muslim identity. On account of attending Hindu public schools, they are not taught Urdu or Islamic history ; speak, read and write Hindi and many of the young are even adopting Hindu names.

dealing with yesterday's difficulties, to be emulated as liberating challenge. Religion has seemed to confine behaviour rather than inspire it. The fundamental fallacy of Muslims has been to interpret Islam as a closed system. And that system has been closed not only from outside truth but also from outside people.

The fundamental hopefulness about Indian Muslims, and therefore Indian Islam, is that this community may break through this. It may be forced to have the courage and humility to seek new insights. It may find the humanity to strive for brotherhood with those of other forms of faith. In the past, civilizations have lived in isolation, juxtaposition or conflict. Today we must learn to live in collaboration. Islam, like the others, must prove creative at this point and perhaps it will learn this in India. (pp. 286-291).

This wishful thinking has not the slightest connection with reality. The fact is that the Indian Muslims could not choose the path of communal integration no matter how fervently they wanted to for that would involve an acceptance, understanding and respect which must be mutual. How can one side pursue this course if the other one rejects it? Nobody believes that secularism in the sense of meaning impartial treatment to all irrespective of race or creed and religious non-discrimination is actually being implemented in India today. Indian "secularism" has come to mean only the imperial domination of the caste Hindus over all other groups. Not only have the Hindus constructed the most reactionary, intolerent and oppressive social system known to history but that, re-enforced with the parochialism of obsolete western-type nationalism where the legal rights of minorities for protection

or even physical survival are lacking, the results are too terrible to contemplate. Yet Dr. Wilfred Cantwell Smith and his colleagues prefer to close their eyes to these facts and take refuge in their delusions.

Two contrasting trends have been evident among the Indian Muslim community in the face of the developing situation in which it has found itself. One is the vicious circle of maladjustment and insecurity which we have already glanced at. The other has been the painful and slow victory of realism, of gradually coming to forced terms with actuality and climbing towards deliberate, responsible, liberated participation in it. In the former way has lain despondancy and the search for escape. In the latter have appeared signs of the dawn of a new day for Islam and its community that might mean a great new freedom, creative adjustment and progress of significance far beyond India. Once again we meet that fundamental crisis in Islam lying in the radical and growing discrepancy between the new situation in which Muslims find themselves and the out-dated emotions and concepts with which they confront it. This discrepancy is nowhere more sharp than in India; this truth is at once the measure of the community's distress and the promise of its solution. The pressure of facts over against the inadequacy, the distortion of emotions and ideas seems already to be elicting not merely anguish but liberation. Despite all this, the situation has in fact steadily improved. Of the two trends, the one towards despair dominated for only three or four years. During the fifties, there has been a gradual liberation. It is our conviction that the welfare of the Muslim community in India, both mundane and spiritual, lies in its standing on its own feet under God, recognizing and accepting responsibility for its own destiny in that situation, able to trust

others and itself and freely and honestly participating in the life of the now nation. It is our observation that it has moved in this direction during the past five years (1951-1956) despite all troubles. Of the various factors contributing to this move, the chief one has been the success of secularism. That success, has, of course, been partial, yet basic. The Muslims have seen law and order prevail; have seen the police prevent riots against themselves,* have watched the secular state restraining triumphant Hindus from reconverting a mosque to a temple. In other words, they have found that they could live at peace in India and are free to practice and indeed preach their religion. Not much reflection has been needed to realize that their survival and welfare depends squarely on the secularity of the state. The full theological implications of this are as yet far from worked out but the sheer fact is striking that, whatever traditional theology may say, secularism works and for the Muslims is not a bugbear but a boon. Relatively few Muslims seem to have clung to the Islamic state idea. Such recognition has been furthered by the realization that Pakistan is no utopia.** Just as it has gradually become clear that things in India are not so bad, so also it has begun to filter though that in Pakistan they are not so good. And some, at least, are honest enough to acknowledge that they as a minority in India have in both theory and practice a better status than the Hindu minority in the neighbouring Islamic republic. (pp. 278-281).

What a gross misrepresentation of fact! Bangladesh had a substantial Hindu minority as well

* In fact, the Hindu and Sikh police have actively participated in all the anti-Muslim riots and massacres and done nothing to protect these helpless people.

** Pakistan may be no utopia but at least the Indo-Pak Muslims have their own country and, thanks to Qaid-e-Azam, are a majority in their own land.

as some Buddhists and Christians but where were their complaints of maltreatment and discrimination? When in the three decades of the history of Pakistan has there broken out any communal rioting comparable to the occasions in India too numerous to count when Hindus ran beserk in Ranchi, Aligarh, Gujrat and Allahbad which claimed so many thousands of innocent Muslim lives? Not only do the Indian police fail to make any attempt to stop these disorders or punish those responsible, but, with the open connivance of the Hindu Government, actively participate in the massacres themselves! If nothing else, subsequent events in India in the two and a half decades since Wilfred Cantwell Smith penned these lines, have proved that secularism does not work!

Of course, if Pakistan had really fulfilled its duty as an Islamic state, the Muslims in India would have never been compelled to endure these calamities. Retrospectively speaking, if the Mughal monarchs had assumed their responsibilities as Muslim rulers and organized intensive *tabligh* or missionary work, the majority of Indians would have embraced Islam and hence the necessity for Partition and all the disasters that followed in its wake, never would have arisen. The Indian Muslims have certainly borne the brunt of hypocritical policies in Pakistan. The signing of the Tashkent Declaration (January 10, 1966) and the Simla Agreement in 1973 was none else than an outright betrayal of Kashmir and indeed the rights of all the

Muslims of India. The imposition of the Pakistani Muslim Family Laws Ordinance (March 7, 1961) has resulted in the grave danger of the Muslims in India being deprived of their own personal laws. How can the Muslims of Pakistan expect the Hindus of India to show any respect for their Islamic cultural heritage if they do not respect it themselves ?

Dr. Wilfred Cantwell Smith is not content here with a careful, objective, dispassionate description, interpretation and analysis but feels compelled to tell the Muslims that they are all wrong and that because he allegedly understands Islam better than anyone else, he has the undisputed right to dictate to us what we should do with our religion !

> Whatever one may believe about Islam's transcendence, yet the earthly manifestation of Islam, both temporal and spiritual, is the creation of Muslims. The tendency in recent Islam has been to stress man's freedom. The present writer believes as a matter of warm personal conviction, of cool analysis and empirical observation that man is free. This applies to all fields though our particular concern is specifically religious. What the Muslim peoples now do in every phase of life will constitute Islamic history. What they do in spiritual matters will constitute the next stage in the development of the religion of Islam. The devout (echoed in part by outside skeptics) may protest that Islam is fixed. For them a certain type of peity holds; it is given by God. Theologically this bears consideration. It is a question of universal import whether the religions are given by God or whether God gives Himself while the religions as we know them are man's response. Man begins to be adequately religious only when he discovers that God is greater and more important

> than religion. Certainly, as we have seen, one can find modern Muslims whose loyalty to Islam as tangible phenomena seems greater than their faith in God. Yet one may perhaps not be overly bold in surmising that the creative development of Islam as a religion on earth rather lies in the hands of those Muslims whose concern for the forms and institutions evolved in Islamic history is subordinate to their lively sense of the living, active God who stands behind the religion and to their passionate, but rational, pursuit of social justice. The Islam that was given by God is not the elaboration of practices, doctrines and forms that outsiders call Islam but rather the vivid and personal summons to individuals to live their lives always in His presence and to treat their fellow men always under His judgment. (pp. 307-308).

According this purely relative outlook, Islam has no transcendental reality at all. Islam has nothing to do with obedience with the specific precepts of Quran and *Sunnah* because all of these are condemned as out-dated and irrelevant. There are no standards according to that view in judging right or wrong, true or false except in the purely pragmatic terms of the *status-quo*. Islam is merely what Muslims do and the criteria of their success or failure are evaluated exclusively in terms of immediate material wealth and worldly power. According to the orientalist, if Islamic history has failed to be effective in modern times, the fault lies in the inherent inadequacy of the Islamic ideal and its applications. The devout Muslim would say that the fault lies within ourselves and it is we who must change in closer submission to what God has revealed. And even if we fail in thls world, we must

be rewarded in the Hereafter and that is the real triumph. The two points of view are irreconcilable.

Because it has been written with an ulterior motive, the avowed purpose of this book—intercommunication between the Islamic and Western cultural traditions in the modern context to further mutual knowledge, understanding and comprehensibility—has been utterly defeated. The book has failed in its aims because the author has allowed his prejudices to gain the upper hand and thus demonstrated his incapacity to deal with both on equal terms.

Dr. Wilfred Cantwell Smith is well aware of the fact that "the denial of transcendence means the denial of value" and he underscores the truth of that statement by citing the awful consequences of the regimes of Nazism, Fascism and Communism, but due to his deep-rooted prejudice, he cannot extend the merits of absolute moral value to include Islam. Thus he joins the chorus of his fellow travelers in orientalism who insist that at best the validity of the doctrines, practices and institutions endorsed by the Quran and the *Sunnah* were restricted to Western Asia in the medieval period. Now that times have changed, Islam must also change. At least so far as Islam is concerned, Dr. Wilfred Cantwell Smith zealously propagates the Marxist premise that man's ideals and cultural values must be determined by his physical environment and if this changes, then his moral outlook must be transformed to make the two compatible. But if we

accept the premise that all religions and philosophical systems are the product of their time and place and have no validity beyond a given historical period or geographical locality, then the same must logically be true of Western civilization too. Thus what we call "modernity" must also be doomed to perish in the flux of history. Yet Western norms are always upheld as absolute, infallible, invincible and indestructible, the truth of which nobody dare question. Here is a contradiction that he cannot remove.

In short, Dr. Wilfred Cantwell Smith has not depicted the situation in the contemporary Muslim world so much as it really is than as he would like it to be and every shred of evidence he could lay his hands on has been cleverly distorted to support these preconceived notions.

THE HUMANIST VIEW

What are the basic causes of the unrelenting hostility of the West towards Islam ? Some Muslim scholars and writers are inclined to attribute this antipathy as a lingering relic of the Crusades and others, indulging in wishful thinking, suppose that since World War II, the orientalists are gaining a greater appreciation of Islam and its role in history and growing more understanding and sympathetic. The hard fact is that the trend is in the opposite direction. Why ? There are two important reasons for this attitude—historical and philosophical. First—Islam is the only serious rival that Western civilization has ever encountered in its history. For almost a thousand years, Islam and European Christendom engaged in a life-and-death struggle for world domination. The West hates and fears Islam because it challenges the very existence of everything it stands for. Although today the Muslims are unorganized, backward and impotent, politically, economically and militarily, the West has nothing to fear from our actual power which is non-existent but it is mortally afraid of our *potential* power. What the Great Powers of the West fear above all else is the emergence of an effective Islamic state* and a united Muslim bloc. The large

* The hostile Western reaction to the Islamic Revolution in Iran, which deposed the Shah, is proof of this.

number of books on Islamic affairs written in various European languages over the last decades and the growing number of departments of Islamic research established throughout Europe and America testifies that the West regards the Muslim world, even in its decadence, as important enough to require special attention. Second—Islam's challenge to the West is not only political but derives its driving force from divinely-revealed transcendetal ideals which undermine the secular humanism that has been the foundation-stone of Western civilization ever since ancient Greece. The philosophical conflict must now be waged between the adherents of atheism, agnosticism, materialism and moral relativity and those who uphold the transcendental ideal. In this ideological struggle, the orientalists consider it their duty to flood the Muslim countries with the propaganda that Islam and its way of life is hopelessly "medieval" and obsolete. They are confident that if the rising generation of Muslims can be converted to the gospel of "progress" so they will consider no alternative but the materialistic outlook, they will be too intellectually servile and psychologically demoralized to pose any menace to the vested interests in the West.

Since the Second World War, at least three quarters of the books written by orientalists have concentrated on the so-called modernization of the Muslims in this or that country. Orientalists would like to deceive us that the object of these works is

simply a realistic appraisal of the contemporary scene as it affects a strategic area of the globe. However, a deeper analysis of these studies reveals much more complex factors in action. Most important, the quality of orientalism has markedly declined. In contrast to the old German orientalists who dealt extensively in exhaustive detail from original sources with Islamic history and culture, their counterparts in America are extremely impatient with that and have insisted on shifting the emphasis to sociology, politics and current events. The reason for this that the former requires knowledge of Arabic and acquaintance with Arabic classics and other relevant Islamic literature, all of which requires time, effort and at least a degree of sympathy for the subject while the latter makes no such demands. Thus it has become fashionable for Western institutions of learning to devote countless seminars, books and magazine articles to the so-called "modernization of the Middle East" which is held to be the only really worthwhile topic while the profound study of the richness of Islamic culture and its history is receding into the background. The result is a superficiality and stereotyped thinking which varies so little from one orientalist to the next that this literature makes monotonous reading.

The book under discussion* is a minor landmark in this "modernization of the Middle East" series. The author is an Egyptian-born Jew, staunchly devoted to Zionism*, who has lived in Israel and also served in the Israeli army. While writing this book, he served as lecturer in the Department of Government at Harvard University. This book has been chosen as representative of so much other writing of that kind, not because the author himself is important but because it is better written than average, deals with the subject thoroughly and is more frank in the expressing of opinions. The only other works avaliable in English on this subject are *Islam and Modernism in Egypt* by Charles Adams, Oxford University Press, London, 1933 and *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age* by Albert Hourani, Oxford University Press, London, 1962. Unfortunately, unlike Adams and Hourani who are content with a more or less descriptive narrative, Mr. Safran has written with ulterior motives :

> The first and basic proposition is that a political community cannot be viable and stable unless it is founded upon a more or less generally shared set of ideas ; modes of thinking, norms and values (which will also be referred in this study as belief-system), ideology, world-view or *weltanchauung*. Such a belief system interprets for the various groups in the community the world they live in, justifies the institutions under which they live and helps regulate relations between them.
>
> The second proposition is that there is an intimate connection between material realities—economic, social and

* *Egypt in Search of a Political Community': An Analysis of the Intellectual and Political Evolution of Egypt:* 1804-1952, Nadav Safran, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1961.

* See *The United States and Israel*, Nadav Safran, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1963.

political conditions—and modes of thought, ideas, norms and values. A certain complex of material conditions suggests a certain kind of world-view and excludes others. Briefly then, there is a connection between material realities and belief-systems to the extent that a drastic change in the former may make a particular belief system obsolete, require its modification or replacement and suggest the direction it should take. Such ideological reorientation may take a long time to materialize, if it does at all; meanwhile the community, deprived of a valid belief-system, may become the victim of disorder and confusion and have to be kept together by sheer force or by some temporary expedient.

The third proposition as the basis of this study suggest that there is one experience which most, if not all, societies must undergo and which nearly always exerts such pressure on the existing belief-system as to disrupt it and lead to the breakdown of the political community. This experience is one in which a society, starting from a position of adherence to a theologically oriented belief-system, first comes under the impact of modern science, technology, economics and methods of organization and so faces the need to reformulate its belief-system to give it a human orientation. In applying the terms "theological" and "human" to belief-systems, we do not differentiate between systems what do or do not have a place for the deity and religion but between those in which the ideas, values and norms they encompass are viewed as having their foundation in objective "given" transcendentally "revealed", truth and those in which these values are viewed as having their foundation in truth that is ascertained by the human faculties, including, as the case may be, ideas about the diety and religion. Why such a transition is made necessary by modern science, technology, economics and methods of organization is apparent; These disciplines testify to man's ability to understand

and manipulate his natural and human environment by the means of principles which *he* has discovered or learned. The reason why the transition is so difficult is that belief-systems in general, by virtue of the function they fulfill in the community, become part of the community's consciousness of itsolf, a means of identifying and distinguishing it from others and therefore they acquire a certain sanctity which makes them more resistant to change than material conditions. To the community itself, its established belief-system is never the relatively temporary and changing phenomenon that it in fact is, but is regarded as the culmination and final result of the historical process. And if this is be case the with belief-systems in general, how much more is it with systems that are avowedly considered as revealed and sacred ?

The relevance and application of these three propositions to Egypt will be indicated in the following brief statement of the problem to be examined in this study: Egypt was heir to a belief-system based on Islamic doctrine which had evolved over a period of many centuries parallel to the evolution of her material conditions. Both belief-systems and material conditions had been crystallized by the beginning of the Ottoman occupation and changed very little in the next three centuries. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the basic character of the Egyptian Government and structure of the economy and society began to undergo a very rapid change under the impact of renewed contact with Europe while the belief-system remained frozen. An increasingly widening gap developed between reality and ideology which undermined the existing political community and threatened to condemn Egyptian society to a permanent state of instability and tension unless the gap were bridged by means of a readjustment of the traditional belief-system or the formulation of a new one capable of serving as a foundation for the new political community. This study

> therefore is intended to analyze the precise nature of the conflict between traditional ideology and modern reality, the efforts made to meet the problem, the difficulties ecountered in the process and the requisites of an eventual solution. (pp. 1—4).

The "solution", of course, is the outright rejection of Islam in favour of secularism and materialism. The author bases his study on the blind assumption that the total westernization of the non-Western world is the natural law of history and an integral part of evolutionary progress. He refrains entirely from passing any moral judgments about the undesirable effects of this rapid social change ; he simply accepts the status—quo without question as inevitable and final.

After this introduction, Nadav Safran attempts to depict the Islamic legacy of Egypt which paints it as black as possible. Peering through his dark glasses as a Jew, his attitude is much harsher than Christian critics. He can see no good in Islam at all. He cannot even acknowledge Islam as historically valid and beneficial for its time and place. For him, Islam is merely a rigid system of formalism, superstition and retrograde, arbitrary, laws having no contact with real life. He tells us that Islam is purely man-made and as vulnerable to error as any other religious and philosophical order. According to him, the *Shariah* is but an incoherent mixture of Arabian, Byzantine, Persian, Nestorian and Jewish law and usages "which were

taken over and incorporated into the canon by reading them into the Quran and the Hadith or by inventing traditions for the purpose". (p. 15) He argues that, except in the sphere of personal status, the *Shariah* was never consistently applied and that the ideals of Islam as applied to politics are hoplessly impractical, unrealistic and unworkable.

After these attempts to show why Islam as a way of life has been harmful to mankind and consequently, has no justification for existence, he places the full blame for the stagnation, corruption and backwardness of the Muslim world on the Quran.

> The conception of Muhammad's mission has led to a pessimistic view of history. Until the appearance of the Prophet, it was possible to view the historical process as progress toward a perfect revelation of God's will but with the appearance of Muhammad, this process came to an end. Since Muhammad was viewed as the "Seal of the Prophets", no further perfection could be expected in the statement and interpretation of the Divine will. Henceforth, history could move only on or below the level to which Muhammad had raised it and, as a matter of fact, the chances that it would remain on that level were poor. It is clear that in the Islamic view, perfection is to be sought in the past to which all present activity must refer for justification. (p. 16).

In other words, once the Truth is known, it cannot be changed and without change, no "progress" is possible.

He begins his thesis with Napoleon's invasion in 1798 which awakened the Egyptian elite to their hopeless backwardness face to face with the overwhelming might of Europe. Then he proceeds to deal with the westernizing reforms implemented by Muhammad Ali which revolutionized the political adminstration and economic structure of the country. This is followed by Khedive Ismail's attempts to westernize Egypt culturally by building a splendid opera house in Cairo to prove to celebrities that "Egypt is part of Europe". Next, the apologetics of Shaikh Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905) and his disciple, Shaikh Rashid Rida (1865—1935) are discussed which tried to interpret Islam as relevant to modern life. In criticizing Rashid Rida's book on the *Khilafat* he says :

> It is important to underline the extremely moral-idealistic approach of Rashid Rida to politics that made it impossible for him to draw any practical lesson from the past experiences of the Muslims. The fact that a political system had admittedly worked correctly for only forty out of fourteen hundred years, did not for a moment lead him to look for weaknessos in its procedural arrangements but to search instead for villains and wicked plotters. Decidingly, Rida's view of politics was religious —the excellence of a political system is entirely determined by the quality of its ideals, never by how it performs. (p. 80).

The only personality for which Nadav Safran displays any genuine sympathy is the Egyptian nationalist, Lutfi as-Sayyid (born 1872), a zealous champion for secularism and total westernization.

In his public speeches and writings that appeared in his journal, *al-Jarida*, during the period just before World War I, he sang the most lyrical praises of Europe, its culture and institutions, at the same time urging his country men to repudiate Islam and drink inspiration from the pharaohs.

> Lutfi frankly rejected all notions of nationalism founded on religion. "We are not partisans of this Muslim League (meaning pan-Islamism) because it is religious whereas we believe that nationality and the bonds of utility are the bases of political action". He also derided the attempts to link the Egyptians to the Arab or Turkish lineage and considered such acts just as dishonourable as the attempt to break away from one's own family. The three millenia of ancient Egyptian history, he contended, have created a "pharaonic core" which together with the elements of later Egyptian history, conspired to produce a distinct Egyptian personality. Lutfi's rejection of pan-Islamism in the face of well-known instinctive popular sympathies toward it, was not only a radical theoretical departure but also an act of great moral courage. His opposition to the appeal of Islam, even as a political slogan, at a time when it appeared to many that Egypt had no other recourse in dealing withthe British, revealed rare integrity. It also marked the highest point reached by any Egyptian to date in the emancipation from the obsession with the problem of power as a religious issue. The important thing is that Lutfi perceived clearly the problem facing Egyptian society in the matter of erecting a true political community, suggested a direction for its solution and courageously blazed the trail himself. He realized that what Egypt needed most was a thorough re-education in a new belief-system and did not hesitate to break away entirely from traditional Islamic political concepts. (pp. 15-17).

After dealing with "liberal nationalism" in the first decades of the century, he goes on to discuss the so-called "progressive phase" led by such westernizers as Qasim Amin, the champion of feminism, Abdul Aziz Fahmi, who for years campaigned for the adoption by the Arabic language of the Roman alphabet, the nationalist, Sa'ad Zaghlul and the blind intellectual, Dr. Taha Hussain. To his dismay, he finds a whole galaxy of intellectuals, who during the 1920's were the most fervent westernizers, suddenly reverse their position a decade later and zealously support the case of Islam. The most gifted of these—Ahmad Amin—he cites as "an extreme case of retrogression". (p. 228).

To Nadav Safran, the most reactionary of the reactionaries was, of course, Shaikh Hassan al-Banna (1906-1949), the founder *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun.*

> In discussing the work of the intellectual leaders during the reactionary phase, we have qualified this movement as dangerous and have consequently considered the intellectual's indirect contribution to its growth as one of the most damaging products of their Muslim orientation. The danger of *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun* lay in the mentality governing its use of violence and in the ideology and programme in whose name it was ready to commit it. In general, it can be said that the members of *al-Ikhwan* knew bitterly and well what they were opposed to but they knew very little of what to put in its place. They believed that state and a society based on the Quran and the Tradition would cure all the ills of their people but they had no real knowledge of what must be done to build such a state. Worse still, they were not aware of their ignorance because they had no clear idea of the intricate problems of a modern state and a modern society and were consequently disposed to consider anyone who objected to their programme, even on technical grounds, as an enemy of Islam who deserved to be struck down by force. The ideology of *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun* was essentially a version of the views of Rashid Rida and the Manarists reduced to a simple creed, grounded more on faith than systematic thought, cast into the frame of a militant movement, inspired and activated by negative nationalism and reinforced by concern with the bitterly felt social misery. (p. 232).

To support his view of *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun* as a negative, destructive force, he quotes at some length from Shaikh Muhammad al-Ghazzali's book, *Our Beginning in Wisdom* which was published in Cairo in 1950 and translated into English three years later*. He tries to show that the literature of *al-Ikhwan* seldom rose higher than the customary polemical, apologetic approach, based on superficial romanticism. Although, unfortunately, this mediocrity did at times find its way into *Ikhwan* literature, the author indicates his biased thinking by citing this rather obscure writer and completely ignoring the more gifted *Ikhwan* scholars such as Dr. Said Ramadan, Shahid Abdul Qadir Awdah Shahid and especially Sayyid Qutb Shahid who attained the reputation as one of

* Since the infamous Camp David Accord, Shaikh Muhammad al Ghazzali has been active in the Islamic movement in Egypt, and vocal in his opposition to President Anwar Sada'at's disastrous policies.

the finest writers on Islam in the modern Arabic-speaking world.

At the conclusion, Nadav Safran lauds the 1952 military coup d'etat as arriving "just in the nick of time" to rescue Egypt from the "disaster" of *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*. On the one hand, he enthusiastically praises the Nasser regime for having suppressed this "reactionary" movement by force and having banned the publication and circulation of all books and periodicals upholding Islam as a comprehensive way of life as opposed to westernism. On the other hand, he rightly condemns this dictatorship for its stifling control over intellectuals and artists which patronized "Socialist Realism" and compelled art and literature to serve the purposes of State propaganda, all of which thwarts creative achievement in every field.

According to Safran, the fatal flaw in Nasser's campaign against Islam was his identification of Egyptian nationalism with pan-Arabism for so long as Egyptians regard themselves as Arabs, they will never be able to disregard their Islamic heritage. Thus he concludes his work with a plea to the regime to follow the precedent of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk.

Why did the westernizers fail ?

> The problem was aggravated for Egypt by three factors : (1) that she had to undergo change at a more accelerated rate than the Christian West ; (2) that the forces of change were of foreign importation at a time when foreign powers were encroaching on her : and (3)

> that Islam had been from the beginning far more involved in the politico-social order than Christianity. Speaking in the most general terms, we may conclude that these three points of difference proved to be precisely the factors most responsible for Egypt's failure to evolve a viable modern ideology. (p 245).

The author adds that since the period of his study covers three or four generations, that time is too brief to enable Egypt to reach the stage of evolution which took centuries for Europe to attain. Like his fellow orientalists, Nadav Safran denies the right or even the possibility for Egypt or any other Muslim country to pursue its own course of development. He assumes that the Muslim world, now confronted with the same secularism that challenged Christian Europe at the dawn of her "Renaissance", has no choice but to follow the identical pattern.

There are two potent reasons for the failure of the westernizers in Egypt as in all Muslim lands which Nadav Safran does not mention : First—instead of manifesting itself as a natural, spontaneous movement, Westernization was arbitrarily imposed (often by extremely harsh and ruthless methods) by the ruling elite upon their unwilling subjects which made it justifiably unpopular. These rulers, having been so completely alienated from their people that they are indigenous by blood only, can neither sypmpathize nor identify their aspirations with them. As can be readily documented by contemporary Egyptian literature, the economically

privileged elite has nothing but contempt for the workers and peasants and the latter reacts quite naturally with hatred and fear. Hence far from promoting national solidarity, the Westernizers have caused social disintegration, resulting in an unending conflict between the rulers and the ruled. Under such conditious, progress—even material progress-is impossible. Second—the transition from the so-called "progressive phase" of liberal nationalism, examplified by Lutfi as-Sayyid, to the "reactionary" period of *al Ikhwan*, was the natural and inevitable consequence of the changes in the power of the West itself. At the turn of the century, the West had reached its climax. The dazzling brilliance of its achievements in science, technology and industry combined with the imperial might of Britain and France who reigned supreme over Asia and Africa, quite understandably overwhelmed the Egyptians in their poverty and backwardness with inferiority-complexes. Then suddenly they witness the horrible devastation of World War I, during which the solidarity of European power crumbled to pieces, and then in the early 1930's, the Great Depression which exposed the defects of the Western economic system. Less than a decade later, Europe was ravaged by World War II followed by a total moral, social and cultural collapse. In 1900 the revolt against Tradition and Authority under the slogans of "freedom", "liberalism" and "progress" was irresistible but a half century later, the intellectuals had discovered through bitter personal experience

that the secular humanism to which they so desperately clung for their salvation was dead-end street that led nowhere. The example of Europe was right before their eyes to show them that nihilism, opportunism and expediency can never provide a workable basis for wholesome human relations, social welfare and political stablity. Yet Nadav Safran steadfastly adheres to his premise that if only Egypt could break with her Islamic past, all good would automatically follow. The most perceptive Muslims in Egypt, as elsewhere, learned that the cause of the social disintegration in the West is the absence of any loyalty to transcendental values. In brief, the failure of westernism in the East is the failure of westernism in the West.

> Viwed from a broad perspective, the phenomenon of *al Ikhwan al Muslimun*, its rise, its ideology, its violence and its success is to us a negative confirmation of the original premise upon which this study was based. Because humanistic, rational and secular ideology failed to emerge in Egypt, the *Ikhwan* sought to fill the vacuum with faith and because the existing Westernized order remained alien to the people, failure of function was mistaken as failure of principles. (pp. 242-244).

Here Nadav Safran has eloquently succeeded in refuting his own arguments. On the one hand he asserts that Islam cannot satisfy the aspirations of the Egyptian people and then in very next breath, he is forced to confess that the Westernizers have failed and their materialistic philosophies rejected by the overwhelming majority of Egyptians, In the end, the author is compelled to admit

that westernization has solved nothing.*

This book suffers from an acute case of schizophrenia. On one side are the author's baised views and on the opposite, his standards of scholarship which constantly conflict with each other but so blinded was this orientalist by prejudice that he could not see these contradictions.

* The end-result of this enforced Westernization was the signing of the Camp David Accord in September 1978 and the peace-treaty with Israel in March 1979 which placed Egypt under the complete political, economic and military domination of America.

THE MODERNIST VIEW

Religious modernism is the attempt to recast traditional theological values in the light of contemporary thought. It is accomplished with the conviction that in order that religion be made "relevant" to modern conditions and needs, it must be forced into harmony with contemporary norms. The modernists judge religion by materialistic criteria and anything in the former which conflicts with the latter must be explained away, reinterpreted arbitrarily or discarded as obsolete. The motto is that "religion must be keep pace with the 'times".

Evolutionary humanistic philosophy begins with the premise that religion is man-made and has continued from prehistoric days to the present to continually evolve in order to suit human needs. As man's knowledge and mental horizon enlarges with experience, old concepts must be discarded as out-dated. Jewish and Christian modernists tried to convert the absolute, transcendental, otherworldly ideals of their respective faiths into secular humanism, with an ethic determined by utility and all reference in the Scriptures to the Hereafter irrelevant and meaningless. Jewish and Christian

modernists view their Scriptures as a continuously growing, evolving product of its age only whose commandments and prohibitions were the product of the primitive mind. By means of "historical research," "Higher Criticism" tried to disprove Divine Revelation by asserting the purely human authorship of the Bible. In this way was the Scriptures of the Jews and Christians stripped of all authority, awe, reverence and even respect. Thus it is natural that the Orientalist wish to delve into the speculation that Islam is doomed to the same fate.

Modern Trends in Islam by H.A.R. Gibb, first published in 1945 by Chicago University Press, has become a classic of its kind and one of the most authoritative sources of reference to younger Orientalists who want to deal with the same subject. For this purpose, it was reprinted in New York in 1972.

> Speaking in the first person, therefore, I make bold to say that the metaphors in which Christian doctrine is traditionally enshrined satisfy me intellectually as expressing symbolically the highest range of spiritual truth which I can conceive, provided that they are interpreted, not in terms of anthropomorphic dogma but as general concepts related to our changing views of the nature of the universe. I see the Church and the congregation of Christian people as dependent on each other for continued vitality, the Church serving as the accumulated history and instrument of the Christian conscience, the permanent element which is constantly renewed by the stream of Christian experience and which gives both direction and effective power to that experience. My view of Islam will necessarily be the counterpart of this. While giving full weight to the historical structure of Muslim thought and experience, I see it also as an evolving organism, recasting from time to time the content of its symbolism. It is understandable that modern Muslim theologians themselves should protest against innovations and should seek to tie Islam down to its medieval dogmatic formulations by denying, first of all the possibility and second, the legitimacy of the reconstruction of Islamic thought. But it is certainly not for the Protestant Christian to refuse to Muslims, either as as community or as individuals, the right to reinterpret the documents and symbols of their faith in accordance with their own convictions. (pp. xi-xii).

Because H.A.R. Gibb is intellectually honest and does not claim, like so many other orientalists, to be "objective," and also because he has more insight into the cultural values of Islam than do most non-Muslim scholars, his works are less objectionable. Although he is a firm believer in the necessity for Muslims to adopt modernism, his work is valuable to the Muslim scholar because it is the best criticism of the modernist movement in Muslim lands by European. The main chapters of *Modern Trends in Islam* are devoted to exposing all the glaring blemishes and errors of his subject. The classic works of Muslim modernism which H.A.R. Gibb cites—Syed Ameer Ali's *The Spirit of Islam* and Allama Iqbal's *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*—for analysis and unsparing criticisms are representative and well-chosen.

As a typical example of the fallacy of Muslim modernists, H, A. R. Gibb quotes the following

passage from Allama Iqbal's *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam.*

> Heaven and Hell are states—not localities. Their description of the Quran is the visual representation of an inner fact, i;e, character. Hell, in the words of the Quran, God's kindled fire which mounts above the hearts—the painful realization of one's failure as a man. Heaven is the joy of triumph over the forces of disintegration. There is no such thing as eternal damnation in Islam. Hell, as conceived by the Quran, is not pit of everlasting torture inflicted by a revengeful God : it is a corrective experience which may make a hardened ego once more sensitive to the living breeze of Divine grace. Nor is heaven a holiday. Life is one and continuous. Every act of a free ego creates a new situation and thus offers further opportunities of creativo unfolding. (pp. 116—117)

Says H. A. R. Gibb : "Allama Iqbal shares a weakness which is common to all the modernists. Throughout his lectures on the *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam,* he constantly refers to Quranic verses in support of his arguments. But we cannot help asking ourselves two questions : Do these quotations represent the whole teaching of the Koran on the point at issue ?" and "Do they mean what Iqbal says they mean ?" In some cases in *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam,* I suspect actual philological misrepresentations but more generally, there is an obvious strain between the plain sense of the actual teachings of the Quran, the religious purpose of the Quranic verse and the doctrine to which Iqbal has fitted it. This supports the argument that there is no way for

Liberalism to carry the business of religious modernism forward which does not involve picking and choosing on a scale and with an arbitrariness quite impossible to justify by imposing interpretations contrary to the literal meaning of the Scriptures and which are very far indeed from its original intentions." (p. 83)

"Since it would obviously be impossible to deal here with some hundreds of thousands of modernistic books and pamphlets and to sum up their contents, the general lines of modernist argument can scarcely be better illustrated than by analyzing the chapter devoted by Syed Ameer Ali on the "Status of Women in Islam" in his well-known book, *The Spirit of Islam.* It is true that the writer was a *Shi'ah* and that he adopts a rationalist standpoint but he presents practically the whole range of modernistic and apologetic argument on the subject and more persuasively than most of the later writers and pamphleteers who repeat his assertions in every Muslim language in more violent or more restrained tones."

H. A. R. Gibb proceeds to quote Syed Ameer Ali as follows :

> 'Muhammad perceived the advantages of Purdah and it is possible that in view of the widespread laxity of morals among all classes of the people, he recommended to the womenfolk the observance of privacy. But to suppose that he ever intended his recommendations should assume their present inelastic form or that he ever allowed or enjoined the seclusion of women is wholly opposed to the spirit of

his reforms.' (p. 95).

"The arguments of *The Spirit of Islam*, is that of a defending counsel—here and there conceding an unimportant point in order to cover up tacit omissions, playing down his opponent's case, exaggregating (and even inventing) weaknesses in it and equally exaggerating or inventing points in his own favour. Yet he makes his task much easier by his assumption throughout that the "Quranic legislation was the work of Mohammad himself" and that "each age has its own standard." The superficiality of this historical method, the evasion of difficulties, the resource to *ipse dixit's*, are only the outcome of the intellectual confusion and romanticism with which the whole modernist movement is burdened with and which makes it easy to shut one's eyes to what one does not wish to see. Even Iqbal is caught in the same snare." (p. 100).

H. A. R. Gibb quotes again from Iqbal's *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* :

> I know that the ulema of Islam claim finality for the popular schools of Mohammadan law but since things have changed and the world of Islam is today confronted and affected by the new forces set free by the extraordinary development of human thought in all its directions, I see no reason why this attitude that Islam is immutable should be maintained any longer. Did the founders of our schools ever claim finality for their reasonings and interpretations? Never! The claim of the present generation of Muslim liberals is to reinterpret the foundational legal principals in the light of their own experience and the altered conditions of modern life, is, in my opinion, perfectly justified.' (pp. 159—160).

H. A. R. Gibb comments : "The claim made by Iqbal for the "present generation of Muslim liberals to re-interpret the foundational legal principals" is effect a claim that a small, self-contained minority shall remodel the social institutions of one seventh of the human race ! And what the moral and intellectual qualifications of that minority are for the task, we have already seen. No wonder that the *ulema* ask on what authority they propose to do this ? They cannot claim, for all their ingenuity, the authority of the Quran or the authority of the Prophetic Traditions. Where the modernists have erred is in assuming as the final objective an ideal determined by considerations external to their own society and in trying to force the two in relation with one another. This is to ignore the difference between Muslim society and the Western societies in composition, geographical and economic conditions and intellectual outlook and it can be achieved only at the cost of lifting the argument out of the plane of realities and evading the concrete issues." (pp. 103-104).

This valuable and honest criticism of Muslim modernism should be heeded by all educated and thoughtful persons.

Why has the modernist movement in the Muslim world failed ? The reasons are not those which H.A.R. Gibb presents. It is neither due to

the familiar thought patterns of the traditional Arab mind, nor the old-fashioned educational system nor in the pretext that the Muslim world has not been exposed to Western influence for a long enough period. The reason lies rather in the hopelessly impossible task of reconciling two dismetrically opposed ways of thought. Incompatibles cannot be made to appear compatible without resort to intellectual dishonesty, double-mindness and hypocrisy. H. A. R. Gibb rightly deplores this intellectual mediocrity as it appears in the writings of the Muslim modernists yet he still insists against all the evidence that he reveals to the contrary, on upholding the modernist movement as essential.

Here is an example of his mischief-making in which he chides the Muslims for not judging the Quran by the standards of 'Higher Criticism' which the Jews and Christians have done with the Bible :

> In contrast to the Hadith, the Quran itself has remained almost untouched by any breath of evolutionary criticism. Only a few Indian liberals and still fewer Arab socialists have yet ventured to question that the Quran is the literally inspired word of God, and that its every statement is eternally true, right and valid. (p. 50).

Why has the Western impact on the Muslim world been so uncreative ? Why has westernization not produced a cultural renaissance and awakening comparable to the intellectual giants such as al-Kindi, al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Ibn Rushd who so brilliantly synthesized Greek philosophy with

Muslim thought without breaking with the Islamic tradition ? The first reason is that the impact of Greek learning reached Islamic civilization at the height of its power when it enjoyed unchallenged supremacy over the most strategic areas of the known world. Therefore, Greek learning was approached by Muslim scholars with a confident, independent, critical mind while the impact of the modern West reached the Muslim world in its defeat and humiliation when the Muslims were already demoralized and could only imitate the conqueror, incapable of creating any original product of their own. Secondly, Hellenism was a dead culture ; classical Greek a dead language, and therefore the impact of Greek civilization was entirely academic and derived from books. That is why the Muslims could freely benefit from Greek learning without any detrimental effects on their Muslim identity.

Since H.A.R. Gibb's book was first published in 1945, the modernist movement in the Muslim world has made no progress. Nothing significant has been added to the stock polemical and apologetic methods of Shaikh Muhammad Abduh, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Syed Ameer Ali and Allama Iqbal. Today, modernists bearing Muslim names work under the direct patronage of the Orientalists or the Government and in fact have become indistinguishable in their thoughts and methods from the orientalists themselves. The public in Muslim lands rightly views them with intense suspicion and

mistrust. Modernistic reforms aimed at tampering with the personal laws of the *Shariah* have been imposed by force by the Government in many Muslim countries. Instead of making any further futile attempts to harmonize Islamic laws, institutions and practices with the demands of contemporary life, the average Muslim has simply adopted Western life styles in utter apathy, indifference and defiance of Islamic prohibitions and commandments. The advance of western secular values and the penetration of Western education, radio, television, cinema and the press have created a new generation heedless of the responsibilities and sacrifices essential for a practicing Muslim. But on the other hand, since H. A. R. Gibb's book appeared in 1945, the apologetic approach has lost its appeal and itself become out-dated. Vigorous writers who present Islam in contemporary language without compromising on its doctrine have arisen among the Muslims—Maulana Sayyid Abul Ala Maudoodi, Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah and Dr. Syed Hossein Nasr, to mention four of the most outstanding. Happily, these authors are not affilicted with inferiority complexes. They present an unadulterated Islam on a high intellectual and literary level in modern terms. Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah and Dr. Syed Hossein Nasr have published many of their essays in Western periodicals and thus spread the message of Islam to European and American academic circles. H.A.R. Gibb also underestimates the importance of such significant movements for

Islamic revival as *al Ikhwan al Muslimun* and *Jama'at-e-Islami*, entirely overlooking in his survey of modern trends in Islam, their impressive body of literature. H. A. R. Gibb is wrong in placing the hopes for the future of the Muslim world in the hands of the *ulema* ; it is not the *ulema* who are today carrying forward the standard of renaiscent Islam but the modern educated youth who have, by the grace of Allah, remained true to the Faith.

The greatest tragedy of the book under discussion is that its author persists in the fallacy that Islam needs a "Reformation" rather than a spiritual rebirth to transform the Muslims.

THE CONSPIRACY OF ORIENTALISM*

What is the message Orientalism is preaching to the Muslim world ? Dr. Muhammad el-Bahy, a noted Egyptian scholar and formerly the Director of Cultural Affairs at al-Azhar University, has succintly summarized the favourite notions which characterize almost all of their works with very few exceptions :

> The Orientalists commonly try to convey that the allegiance of Muslim society to Islam endured only for a brief period of time. These were the days when the Muslim society was in its infancy. At that time, an opportunity was afforded to bring about an integration between practical life and the teachings of Islam but as soon as this short elementary phase was over, a gulf was created between Islam and Muslim society and Islam ceased to be the guiding force of life. The more Muslim society advanced and accepted changes, the consequences of the cultural, political, economic and other impressions it received from the outside world, the more complete was the failure of Islam to adjust itself to the requirements of an evolving society. The gulf grew wider till the last seat of the Muslim Khilafat, (*i.e.* Turkey) formaly announced the ejection of Islam from everyday life. Islam will have its place now, it was declared, only in the conscience of the individual. It will not intrude into the general social

* *Islam and Pakistan*, Freeland Abbott, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1908.

> structure and remain solely as a matter of quiet, personal expression within one's private sphere of existence. The inability to implement the teachings of Islam constitutes in its essence the recognition of the logic of social compulsion. It is the outcome of the inability of Islam to influence the needs and circumstances of an ever changing society. Insistence on the observance of Islamic precepts in modern times can only mean isolation from the main stream of life and the willing acceptance of poverty, disease and all-round backwardness. Progress and change is the immutable law of existence from which it is not possible to run away. Muslims must apply this evolutionary, dynamic concept to their Islam also so that they can keep abreast of the modern Western world and rescue themselves from the cess-pool of chaos, lethargy and stupor. What is needed is to bring Islam deliberately under the working of this law by taking steps towards its revision and reformation in the light of contemporary realities. No other course is open to Muslims than to bow down to the law of progress and change and to conform to Western secularism and materialism in their own oriental environment for the Western norms of life are products of long human experience in the fields of thought and action. The Western people have employed the objective and scientific method in the evolution of these norms and customs which does not allow the mind to be overweighed with dogma and superstition and keeps it concentrated solely on the welfare and happiness of mankind.*

In the works of the Orientalists, like the present book under review, these views are not set forth as

* Quoted from *Western Civilization, Islam and Muslims*, Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, Academy of Islamic Research ond Publications, Lucknow, 1969, pp. 177-179.

the mere personal opinion of the author but as indisputable fact—nay, the law of Nature itself—which nobody dare question. So extreme is their arrogance and conceit that they reserve for themselves the right to dictate to Muslims how they should reform their religion! It is shameful that in this Islamic republic of Pakistan, some of these books are prescribed as required texts in our colleges and universities so that our youth have no choice but to learn about Islam from non-Muslims and blindly accept their prejudices as infallible truth.

Orientalism is not a dispassionate, objective study of Islam and its culture by the erudite faithful to the best traditions of scholarship to create profound, original research but nothing but an organized conspiracy to incite our youth to revolt against their faith, and scorn the entire legacy of Islamic history and culture as obsolete. The object is to create as much mischief as possible among the immature and gullible by sowing the seeds of doubt, cynicism and skepticism.

Here are few choice gems which illustrate how low these people are ready to stoop in order to achieve their purpose:

> Much speculation and analysis has been devoted to an effort to discover the source of Muhammad's revelations and thus explain away his claim to prophethood. The results have not been conclusive. Some say Muhammad had a Jewish tutor which may be true; some think that he was acquainted with and impressed by Syrian Christian

> monks which may be true. Others think the trading society in which he lived offered in itself a kaleidoscopic picture of different religions which may also be true. What is fundamental, of course, is that Muhammad did not lay claim to originality for his religion. Time and time again he announced that his revelation was only a confirmation of all previous revelations. Tracing the sources of Quranic passages to Jewish or other traditions, while interesting and revealing to scholars, has no effect upon the Muslim's faith. To the Muslim this kind of analysis seems inconsequential and perhaps the absence in Islam of anything corresponding to the "Higher Criticism" of Christian scholars today is partly dependent upon this attitude. It is, of course, more dependent upon the unquestioned belief that the Quran is God's word and why should one try to criticize what God has said? (pp. 14-15).

And again:

> In time, the Hadith—vast collections of anecdotes about Muhammad and sayings of Muhammad—were collected. They were sifted for accuracy with great care yet apocryphal stories crept in. Many Muslims seemed to feel no compunction about telling a story which they felt *could* be true or *should* be true whether it was to glorify Muhammad or to improve their own position. Thus the Hadith can readily be divided into three broad groups: those depicting a general view of Muhammad's life, those which are questionable because they are not consistent with Muhammad's sayings (stories of Muhammad's miracles despite Quranic detail, are included here) and those dealing with prophetic revelation. Stories of Muhammad's miracles are legion as are stories supporting one Muslim sect against another. In modern times, attacks on the traditionalist approach to Islam have centered on these stories; such attacks, however, are not new in Islam. Particular stories in the Hadith literature have always been under attack

even though they are contained in the most highly regarded collections. (pp. 22.23).

Every one of our great historical figures are ridiculed, belittled and maligned :

On the whole, the Muslim rulers behaved very much as did their medieval counterparts in Europe—they were the Lion-hearted and Barbarossas of their time and place. These often gifted warriors sometimes were extremely pious according to the lights of their time. The usually accepted picture of Mahmud of Ghazni was presented by his secretary who, wrote of his Indian campaigns that "Islam or death," was the alternative Mahmud placed before the people. Mahmud was a stern unitarian opposed both to deviation from his traditionalist creed and to idolatry yet one cannot escape the impression that his movements were at least as strongly tempered by sheer avariciousness as were those of the Anglo-Norman kings of England. (pp. 34-35).

Of Muhammad Ibn Tughluq he writes :

Muhammad delighted above all men in giving presents and shedding blood. At his door was always seen some pauper on the way to wealth or some corpse that had just been executed. Stories were rife among the people of his generousity and courage and his cruelty and severity. A Muslim historian has described ibn Tughluq as a mixture of opposites, which is applicable to so many of these rulers. The inconsistency in their characters may be exaggerated by Muslim chroniclers who sometimes felt that rulers should be contradictory in nature if only as an aid to inscrutability and bore this in mind as they wrote their chronicles. Certainly religious toleration of the Hindus was not considered by Muslim theologians of fourteenth-century India to be a requirement of the Faith. The traditionalist Muslim

read his Quran very literally. God has fires in Hell waiting for infidels and Hindus were certainly infidels. If God was not going to show them any mercy, why should anyone else ? This spirit, one need only note that also appeared among the New England puritans who persuaded themselves that the Indians had no souls and among the California zealots who argued that the Chinese had no souls or if they did, that their souls were not worth saving, It is not unlike the medieval Christian attitude towards heretics. (pp. 35—36),

Freeland Abbott cannot credit Muhammad bin Qassim from acting on any principle on the basis of his faith and strength of character :

When Muhammad bin Qassim, the Arab conquerer of Sind in the eighth century, was faced with this same question, he adopted a more liberal response. The Hindus and Buddhists of Sind were given the status of protected persons as though they were "People of the Book," perhaps because Muhammad bin Qasim *did not have sufficient troops at his disposal to risk stirring up unnecessary discontent.* (p. 56).

In his eyes, Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi is an arch-reationary :

Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi illustrates the type of mind that urged in Islam intellectual isolation and thus encouraged its decline. His insistence on absolute obedience to the *Shariah* prevented him from realizing that many customs even from other religious might not clash with the *Shariah* itself. Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi's attitude was in many ways similar to that maintained by the Roman Catholic Church during the famous Rites Controvery of the seventeeth century when the Jesuits hoped to secure a firm place for Christianity in China by acknowledging certain Chinese adaptations as essentially Christian· The Church's decision

was that Chinese practices could not be adapted as part of Christian rites which must be zealously guarded from external variations as well as propagated. Similarly the law of Islam was to be jealously guarded and Shaikh Ahmad was afraid that the slightest contact with infidels would shake the whole structure. (pp. 60-61).

Of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid's *Jihad* he writes :

His crusade from beginning to end was an *ad—hoc* matter ; the character of his forces prevented it from being anything else. The *Jihad* was a hodgepodge. He was able at one time to assemble 80,000 fighters but he was never able to secure the loyalty of the tribesmen upon whom he most depended. They poisoned his food ; they deserted on the battlefield ; they leagued with the Sikhs. The Sayyid's forces were marked neither by discipline nor by unity and at last in May 1831, caught by surprise, in the mountainous village of Balakot, he and his disciple, Ismail Shahid with six hundred of his men were killed during a Sikh attack The *Jihad*, as one might suppose, was more spectacular than it was successful. That a holy war was considered so enthusiastically by so many traditionalists at this time may indicate the poverty of rational thinking among them. (pp. 92-94).

About Sultan Tippu :

In the South of India. Sultan Tippu, the Muslim ruler of Mysore, tried to strengthen the force of his position facing the British by stirring up the crusading spirit among his soldiers. A manual he had prepared for his forces described warfare against the aggressive disbelievers essential for the triumph of the faith as true Islam. Elsewhere in his manual, he urged every Muslim to resist disbelivers so long as they had the power to do so. Whatever effect Tippu's remarks may have had on stirring up his soldiers, they do not seem to have overly

inspired his Muslims contemporaries. So far as the practical politics of south India were concerned, the unitarian concepts of Islam did not seem to apply. Tippu's defences finally crumbled and in the British victory at Seringapatam in 1799, he died as he had urged his soldiers, resisting to the last. (p. 87).

Thus all the most revered personalities of Muslim history in the Indo-Pak sub-continent are represented as failures because "dogmaticism", and blind "traditionalism" blinded them to the hopeless inadequacy of their faith to face the practical realities of life. The author cannot understand that these men are not respected and revered for their worldly success but rather for their strength of character, their sincerity and single-mindedness of purpose, for their refusal to make cheap compromises and above all, their willingness to suffer and sacrifice for the Islamic cause. But orientalists, such as Freeland Abbott, are so thoroughly steeped in materialism that it is impossible for them to appreciate the finer human qualities which really made these men great. They can only interpret their actions and conduct in the light of expediency, opportunism and naked self-interest.

What is the basic cause of this alleged "failure" and "inadequacy" of Islam throughout its history ?

Jesus never founded a community ; he seems to have been content to serve as a wandering preacher. Indeed, historically, the opportunity to establish a community of his own may never have occurred. For Muhammad, the opportunity did occur. The fear and jealousies of the Meccan tribesmen led to his migration from Mecca to

Medina some two hundred miles north. There he did establish a civil community and he did endow it with laws. These laws became part of the faith and the judges who later appeared to rule on the legal aspects of Islam had to interpret and apply them. Thus the judges played a role as promoters of uniformity within Islam. Muslims argue that because Islam includes such a practical example of how a civil community should be organized, it is closer to completeness and hence to perfection than Christianity or any other religion. One could just as well argue, however, that the great weakness of Islam has rested in this claim of completeness. The decline of Islam from its glorious days is certainly related in part to the feeling of Muslims that they were self-sufficient unto themselves. This has always been a fatal assumption as the experience of other religions indicate. The Muslim invasion of India was successful in part because the Hindus had weakerned themselves through self-imposed isolation and aloofness. The greatest service of the European Reformation was to neutralize such a self-sufficient attitude by splitting western Christianity into two camps. Modern European progress began when Europeans developed an intelletual spirit, enabling them to learn from others without feeling inferior about it. (pp. 20-21)

The civilization of the West is the most arrogant in history. The attitude of the ancient Greeks in regarding all non-Greeks as barbarians who had been created to serve the Greeks as slaves has persisted down to the present day. Westerners have never had a trace of any humility, and are convinced that they are superior to all other peoples and cultures in every respect. This unbridled conceit was given its full expression by Maculay when arguing for the imposition of Western education in India, he insisted that "western learning

is the seat of all civilized knowledge. "I have never found among the orientalists any who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia." (p. 113). Furthermore Western civilization deems the destruction of all other civilizations and the genocide of aboriginal peoples as indispensable for the "progress" of humanity.

Islam thus became a religion of law and commandments with primary emphasis on the civil side ; the judges of the law and the commentators on the law were in their own way as influential as the Christian clergy. The extraordinary development of the mystics—the Sufis in Islam was a reaction to this emphasis on the legal, the "practical" which often seems to a westerner so particularized as to be impractical. (p. 21).

On the philosophical plane the source of the antipathy of modern Westerners against Islam is their implacable hostility towards absolute, transcendental law and morality. The West thinks that constant change and innovation is not only inevitable but the highest of all ideals. The concept that everything must change with the changing times includes not only new discoveries in science and new inventions in technology and their applications but religion, morality and the standards of acceptable social conduct as well. Since morality is a purely relative, subjective concept, standards of right and wrong, truth and falsehood, beauty and ugliness have no meaning for them. Thus nobody asks whether the particular change is good or harm-

ful because since the newest must always be the best, innovation is the highest good in itself. Consequently, Freeland Abbott ridicules the medieval emphasis on the supremacy of the Hereafter to material wellbeing.

> Abu Bakr Razi was a ninth century Persian philosopher and physician. He was the first to give accurate clinical accounts of smallpox and measles and he also made extensive studies of the human eye. His reputation as a physician was deservedly great during his lifetime but, like many other Muslim scientists, Razi made little impact upon his world. To the Muslim community, deeply influenced by traditionalist thought, his discoveries seemed irrelevant and unnecessary. The community held that the important thing in life was not to improve one's wellbeing but to get to heaven when one's earthly life was over. And the road to heaven was chartered as a clear path. That path, preserved and sharply defined by the traditionalists, included prayers and creed but it did not include so living as to avoid measles and smallpox. Razi's discoveries were nonessentials so far as the purpose of life was concerned, and this being so, they were ignored or even attacked. (pp. 25-26)

If Razi was opposed at all, it was not for his contributions to medicine but only for his adherence to certain concepts of Greek philosophy which conflicted with Islamic doctrine. As a physician, he has always been esteemed by Muslims, so much so that the *Unani* system of medicine practiced by *Hakims* in India and Pakistan could not have survived without him. Freeland Abbott is disappointed that the discoveries of Muslim scientists, mathemacians and physicians did not lead to an

open conflict with the established faith, as it did in Europe and the truimph of secularism, materialism and atheism. And that failure is regarded by him as an historical tragedy of the first magnitude.

It is amazing that the leaders of our age assume that through the miracles of science and industry, poverty, disease and illiteracy can and must be eradicated from the earth. Acceptance and resignation to one's misery is condemned as medieval fatalism. The common people in the 'developing' countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America are constantly urged to share in "the revolution of rising expectations" so that their material standard of living can be drastically improved. But should one ever condemn the moral degeneration, as manifested in the loosening of family ties, illicit sex, the epidemic of crime and lawlessness, vulgarity and obscenity in the mass-media and entertainments, increasing drug and alcohol addiction, irresponsible pleasure-seeking and the unprecedented horror and brutality of modern warfare, he is told that **nothing can be done about these things because this is the spirit of the "times."** Since the "times" favour such a permissive moral atmosphere, any effort to check or reverse these trends is futile and all one can do is submit with the utmost abject resignation and adjust one's self as best one can to the "spirit of the age!" Thus Western civilization is assumed as infallible and invincible not because it is right but merely because

it prevails. Islam is condemned and ridiculed not because it is false but because it is unfashionable. Its alleged 'inadequacy' lies in the fact that is impossible to follow the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet and the Western way of life simultaneously.

Thus the author characterizes the history of the Muslims in the Indo-Pak subcontinent as a struggle between the purists and the innovators. He makes no effort to conceal the fact that his sympathies are one hundred percent on the side of the latter. Every apostate like Akbar and every heretic like Sir Sayyid Ahmad, Khan are heaped with praise for their large-heartedness, broadmindedness, liberality and practical common sense to confess that "medieval traditionalist" Islam was totally unworkable. Thus their successors like Syed Ameer Ali, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, of Qadian, Khalifa Abdul Hakim and Ghulam Ahmad, Parvez are magnified out of all proportion to their actual importance. Ex-President Ayub Khan is praised as the champion of a modern, progressive, liberal Islam while it is implied that the approach of Maulana Sayyid Abul Ala Maudoodi is pure escapism into the past and wishful thinking in championing a lost and hopeless cause. But subsequent events have proved precisely the reverse. The practical "pragmatist"—Ayub—has been relegated into the depths of utter obscurity and his rule has become a by-word for corruption and mismanagement, while the "unrealistic" Maulana Maudoodi achieved international renown as one of the greatest champions of the Faith in this century.

Since, like all adherents of contemporary materialism, Freeland Abbott cannot recognize the validity of transcendental values, he absolutely refuses to acknowledge the fact that Islam has any fixed teachings embodied in a distinct civilization of its own. A century ago, when the West was more strongly Christian and faith in transcendental values had not yet been utterly undermined, neither the believer nor the non-believer had any doubt in his mind as to what the teachings of Islam were and where it took its stand face to face with the various problems of life. But in the mind of materialists like Freeland Abbott, Islam has no objective reality at all. What the majority of Muslims everywhere have always understood and practiced as their faith therefore cannot be "Islam" but only "medievalism" and "traditionalism"! For this reason he never bothers to inform his readers at the outset what the doctrines of the Quran and *Sunnah* are and what Islam really stands for. Islam is simply what Muslims do, no matter how much that may conflict with Quran and Hadith.

In the tug-of-war between the traditionalists and the modernists, the auther stubbornly refuses to examine the arguments of the contending parties on their intrinsic, logical merits. If the author's claims to scholarship are justified, then this work would require a dispassionate comparison between the consistency and intellectual honesty of the former with the sophistries and hypocrisy of the latter. The failure of the modernists in the Muslim

world is inherent in the hopeless task of making incompatibles compatible. The double-mindedness of the modernists, who are pulled in several directions at once, can never rise above mediocrity. Only people who are single-minded in their purpose and are ready to struggle and make personal sacrifice for the ideals they cherish can hope for success. If the modernists idealize Islam as identical with Western philosophies, then why retain the label of "Islam" or indeed claim to be "Muslim" at all ?

These arguments, however, carry no weight with the orientalists. They simply do not care about demonstrating the superiority of character and level of intellectual activity of one as opposed to the other. Their aim is nothing but to destroy the faith of the rising generations of Muslims in Islam. They want to encourage every heresy, every schism that appears on the horizon to sow disunity and disssention within Muslim ranks. Since organized Islamic activity has been more or less successfully suppressed in the Arab world and Turkey, the orientalists are engaged in an all-out conspiracy to crush the Islamic movement in Pakistan. The orientalists support the modernists because they serve this purpose. Thus Freeland Abbot praises the heresies of modernism, not because they are constructive and useful in strengthening the state of Pakistan but precisely for the opposite reason—because they are the most potent factors operating for the political, social, and cultural disintegration of the Muslim community. This purely utilitarian

approach is evident in every line of the book.

How do we know that orientalism is a conspiracy ? We can be quite certain of that fact because orientalism and modernism are inseparable from each other. From an ideological standpoint, there is no difference at all between the two except that the latter bears Muslim labels. Orientalism gives its full support to the modernists, not only morally but materially as well. Proof of the identity of orientalism and modernists is the fact that when Dr. Fazlur Rahman was ousted in 1969 from his post as Director of the Islamic Research Institute in Rawalpindi for his heretical pronouncements by out-raged Pakistanis, thanks to the patronage of the orientalists, he went to America and now teaches "Islamics" at an American university.

Like all his colleagues, Freeland Abbott is misinformed about the true position of the modernists in the Muslim world today. They assume that Kemal Ataturk, Habib Bourguiba, Gamal Abdul Nasser and ex-president Ayub Khan are the representative spokesmen of the contemporary Muslim community. Orientalists cannot get it through their heads that these heresies have never been accepted by the people who are sick and tired of hypocritical novelties. This is the cause of the unrelenting warfare between the rulers and the ruled :

> The present struggle more or less in all Muslim countries is that the people are not preapared to go along with

the rulers in the direction in which they are trying to take them and the rulers are not prepared to lead the people in the direction in which they desire to move. This has resulted in a perpetual conflict in all the Muslim countries of the world. And that is Islam today ! *

The standards of scholarship in this book are appalling. Since the author knows not a word of Arabic, Persian or Urdu, he was compelled to accept all his information second-hand from English books. Since the sources on which he depends are themselves deeply prejudiced and he never questions their accuracy or reliability, the results can well be imagined. The language he uses portrays nothing but cynicism and contempt for the entire religious and cultural legacy of Islamic civilization. A reader unacquainted with the subject would suppose that Islam is nothing but cold, soulless, lifeless ritualism and legalism, and that the *Shari'ah* means only legalized polygamy, easy divorce, enslavement of war prisoners, imposing the poll-tax upon infidels and amputating the hand of the thief. By discussing these laws out of their proper context, he paints the blackest and ugliest possible picture of Islam. The question never occurs to him how such an unworkable, unrealistic religion devoid of virtues could secure the loyalty and devotion unto death of hundreds of millions of people throughout the world for fourteen

* ***Islam Today***, **Abul Ala Maudoodi, Idara Matbuat-e-Talaba, Karachi, 1968, p. 57.**

centuries and flourish even in the most adverse circumstances.

The intelligent and mature reader can only react with disappointment with the superficiality of his whole analysis of the subject. Whenever he tries to compare incidents in the Islamic history of the Indo-Pak sub-continent with the Christian church in Europe and America, the analogies are ludicrously far-fetched. In the preface, he acknowledges his indebtedness to the research grant he received from the Ford Foundation and the Fullbright research grant from the United States Educational Foundation without which he admits his book could not have been published. "Naturally none of these institutions is responsible for what is said here but I am grateful to them for giving me the opportunity to say it." The finished product, however, is remarkable for its lack of originality. Nothing is said here that has not been repeated by other orientalists a thousand times before. For any student familiar with the subject-matter, it makes tiresome reading indeed. His trite and stereotyped thinking has nothing to tell us except that Islam is out-of-date and the rising generations in Muslim lands must be compelled to accept that assumption by any means, fair or foul.

EPILOGUE

The most glaring fact which emerges from the preceeding pages is that our adversaries cannot bring forth any serious arguments to refute the truth of the Quran and the *Sunnah*. Despite the fact that most of these orientalists hold important positions and can boast of considerable erudition, they can do no more than curse, denounce, ridicule and in some cases, even distort facts. The theme of all their writings is that Islam must be abandoned on the premise that anything revealed fourteen centuries ago is necessarily obsolete and irrelevant for the technological civilization of today. With their rejection of transcendental values, "change" is upheld as the supreme good and anything old must be discarded as useless if mankind is to "progress". The premise that Islam is "out-of-date" is considered by these people as sufficient proof of its inadequacy and irrelevance for contemporary man. If this is true, then why are they so utterly incapable with all their learning and intellectual ability of any logical argument on the basis of sound scholarship ? Islam is merely condemned because it conflicts with the prevailing materialist outlook. Therefore, they conclude, that if the Quran and *Sunnah* and the sacred *Shariah* that derives from these sources can not be reconciled

with the current fashionable philosophies, then Islam must be false ! Modern civilization is neither infallible, invincible nor indestructible. Its errors and blemishes are so glaring that no serious thinker can ignore them. None of the orientalists discussed at such length here, can convincingly prove why Western civilization is superior to Islamic civilization in explicit terms. Neither can they explain in specific detail why our enemies cannot deny the authenticity of the Quran and the careful preservation to this day in its original form. Even the most hostile critics do not deny the greatness of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Either he must be Prophet or imposter but the imposter can never persevere under difficulties nor does he ever do any constructive work to support his claims. The entire life work, personal character and their combined influence in revolutionizing society over such an extensive area of the world for so many centuries, infinitely more than any other great man ever achieved, is sufficient to prove the supremacy of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

We must now discuss further the futility of expecting our enemies to change and study our faith objectively and sympathetically.

Every person, good or bad, has his own philosophy of life upon which he acts accordingly. The criminal has his own criminal mind and were we to

accept his premises, his anti-social acts are entirely justified. could we glimpse what goes on inside the mind of the insane, their behaviour is logical and reasonable. Likewise, the Hindu, the Buddhist, the Christian and the Jew are each distinguished by a unique way of thinking which from their outlook is the only valid truth. Consequently, it is inevitable that an adherent of one religion or ideology judge another solely on the basis of his own values.

No society can possibly survive unless firmly based on an accepted set of values cherished by its members. These values, which differ from culture to culture, are the criteria by which a people judges what is good and what is not good. Should an individual from one society come into contact with another society based on an entirely different set of values, he is psychologically compelled to judge according to his own standards—not theirs. Hence the fallacy of "objectivity." In the realm of religion and philosophy it does not and cannot exist.

The philosophy of all the orientalists, whose works were discussed on the preceding pages, rests on the following assumptions :

1. The uncritical acceptance of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution that mankind emerged from very lowly animal origins ; that when life first appeared on earth, it was of the simplest and lowliest which over the ages evolved into more and more complex and *highly* devoloped

creatures at the apex of which stands the human race.

2. That Darwin's theory of biology is equally valid when applied to human society which has emerged from the most primitive level, such as that of the Australian and South African Bushman, into more and more complex and highly developed cultures at the apex of which stands modern Western civilization.

3. Therefore, to defy modern Western culture is tantamount to defying the law of evolution, to rebel against progress, against the law of nature itself. The progress from the low, primitive culture to more and more highly advanced civilization is not only desirable but an inevitable law of nature. Since every change is an improvement along the road to progress, the newest must always be the best and any attempt to defend older or previously established standards means retrogression to a more primitive and constricted existence.

4. Modern scientific knowledge has rendered all religions based upon divine revelation and transcendental values obsolete. A society whose members regulate all aspects of their lives according to a divinely-revealed law, equally valid for all times and all places, inevitably results in cultural stagnation and backwardness

because once the truth is known, it cannot be changed, and without change, no "progress" is possible.

These are the criteria by which the orientalists judge our faith. Because the entire Islamic concept of life is so alien to this philosophy, their attitude cannot be anything but hostile. So long as their minds remain distorted, so shall their understanding of Islam. The latter is only a reflection of the former. It cannot be otherwise.

In claiming absolute moral and cultural values, supernaturally revealed which retain their full authority regardless of time and place, Islamic teachings emphatically reject the Western concept of mechanical evolutionary progress. Contemporary thought assumes that religion began with animism, succeeded by polytheism, then envolved into ethical monotheism and finally all previous religious beliefs have been superseded by "scientific" materialism which regards the endeavour to improve man's worldly happiness and physical well-being as the supreme purpose of life.

The devotees of evolutionary progress tell us that since the problems and circumstances of modern life are so utterly different from that which man faced in the past, what was good for man a thousand years ago is bad for him now. But it is a fact that despite all the variations in the physical environment that humans have encountered from cave

man to the Space Age, his mind and body have not altered in the least and his disposition, his natural urges, his attributes, his physical strength and intellectual capacity, the rules governing his behaviour and the motives that induce him to act, the innate virtues and evils of his nature and the psychological motivations that lead him to do good or evil and even the natural forces operating upon him on earth are exactly the same now as they were thousands of years ago. In view of these facts, what truth is left in the complacent assumption that what was right and true yesterday is wrong and false today ?

The true believer does not regard progress in science and technology as identical to the spiritual and moral improvement of the human race for the spiritual and material sides of progress are totally different aspects of life which do not necessarily depend on each other. The struggle for moral and spiritual perfection must begin anew with each generation. The human race can never achieve spiritual perfection as a result of its collective material triumphs. Science cannot be a satisfactory substitute for religion for it can provide us with information only about material things. It may be able to give quite a satisfactory explanation *how* life is created but it has no answer as to *why* life exists. Modern science is by its very nature incapable of giving either the activities of nature or those of man any meaning or purpose. Science enables man

to harness the forces of nature to his advantage but it cannot tell him if he should use this knowledge for constructive or destructive ends. Least of all is science capable of providing man with any moral guidance or spiritual sustenance which are among the most urgent and indispensable of human needs.

What progress has been achieved since the European Renaissance and the so-called "Enlightenment"? Philosophers for the last three centuries have promised us through the replacement of religious "superstition" with scientific "rationalism", to transform this world into an earthly paradise. We hear a great deal of propaganda these days about the necessity for the "advanced" countries of Europe and America to assist backward Asia and Africa to banish poverty, disease, illiteracy and attain universal high living standards. If the resources of the earth, properly utilized, are more than sufficient to enable all humans to live in abundance, prosperity and happiness, why after all these centuries of striving to that end, is the goal further from realization now than ever before ?

The reasons can be explained through the selfishness inherent in human nature which comes to the fore in the absence of nobler ideals. If there is no God and if the existence of the individual is limited to his brief span on earth ; if the grave is the end and there is no Divine judgment, reward or punishment in the Hereafter, then the only purpose of life is to seek personal happiness,

comfort and prosperity for one's self and one's progeny. The morality of the atheist can never rise any higher than what is dictated by expediency and opportunism. Consequently, if man has no fear of Allah, there is nothing to restrain the strong from preying on the weak. History proves that this is as true of nations as individuals. The world becomes a jungle and it is every man for himself. Excessive self-indulgence in material comforts and pleasures leads to the disintegration of the individual personality, and the total disintegration and collapse of the society. Thus it is today that it is in the centres of greatest affluence where spiritual starvation is most acute. The break-up of the family, the epidemic of illicit sex, drug and alcohol addiction, vulgarity and obscenity in the mass-media, arts and entertainments, the obsession of modern man with frivolous play and meaningless amusements, racial discrimination, the prevalence of crime, lawlessness, anarchy and tyranny, the unprecedented brutality of modern war and the prodigous waste of natural and human resources for the most nonsensical luxuries are the outstanding realities of contemporary life. In view of these irrefutable facts, where is that "progress" and "enlightenment" promised to mankind by the worshippers of secular humanism ?

Islam is the only alternative that can integrate the individual harmoniously with society and bring these evils to an end. No man-made religion or philosophy can do this. Man-made faith, prejudiced

at the outset by individual or national sentiments, can never command universal respect and binding authority. Materialism can never inspire the individual with the spirit of self sacrifice indispensable for the preservation of the community and the survival of its way of life.

We must combat the conspiracy of the orientalists by presenting Islam honestly, forthrighly and courageously, uncaring whether the West likes it or not. We must support organized Islamic movements wherever they are to be found and devote all our energies toward their consolidation and expansion. We must obey the Holy Quran and the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet, abandon dualism and hypocrisy and all things not approved by Allah. Those who recognize the mission of the Islamic movement as true must cooperate and help it and those who oppose it and collaborate with the orientalists, must be prepared for drastic retribution in this life and in the world to come.

